

# life along the Boulevards

City of Chicago  
Eugene Sawyer, Mayor

Department of Planning  
Elizabeth L. Hollander, Commissioner

January, 1989

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# *Life Along the Boulevards*

*Using Chicago's Historic Boulevards  
as Catalysts for Neighborhood Revitalization*



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OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

CITY OF CHICAGO

EUGENE SAWYER  
MAYOR

January 24, 1989

Dear Chicagoan:

Whether enjoyed on a casual stroll or through the window of a moving car, Chicago's boulevards entertain, delight, and provide relief from the asphalt and brick of the city's terrain. Although some of the boulevards have deteriorated over the years because of dwindling local resources, the opportunity exists today to draw upon their strengths to promote the revitalization of the surrounding neighborhoods. Community groups along the system have already begun to work with the City to restore the boulevards' greenways and squares.

Restoration of the boulevard system is truly a development for all of Chicago. This plan is not concerned simply about a system of streets, but instead, it finds ways for neighborhoods to use these special features to tackle the gut issues of our neighborhoods: How do we provide adequate, affordable housing? How do we make sure that our youth have adequate recreational opportunities? And how can we make sure that jobs remain in our neighborhoods? We do not want just to drive down a pretty street. We want to drive through, and live in, strong, vital neighborhoods.

Life Along the Boulevards is a plan for the boulevard system that culminates a process begun in 1986 by Mayor Harold Washington's Task Force on Neighborhood Land Use. It is the product of the City's experiences with improvement efforts in various neighborhoods and the technical expertise of consultants made available through federal and private grants. It is also part of this administration's continued commitment to our neighborhoods.

The plan, however, can only move forward with the help of community residents, policy makers, and all of those who embrace the revitalization of Chicago's "emerald necklace" and its communities. I hope that as you read it, you find a role to play in this enterprise.

Sincerely,

Mayor

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## *Stimulus to Neighborhood Vitality: An Overview*



*An aerial view of Logan Boulevard looking east from Logan Square*

Chicago's original 28-mile boulevard system, along with the seven regional parks it joins, is one of Chicago's unique features. It should be as closely linked with the name "Chicago" as Central Park is to New York, the hills to Hollywood, or our own lakefront and skyline to Chicago. When people think of Chicago they should think of our boulevards and parks. Currently the system and the communities along it do not have this recognition, but this plan and other activities focusing on the boulevards are important steps to make this vision a reality.

The boulevards lay like a gem waiting to be rediscovered. They have lost their luster, but they remain basically intact. Chicago's boulevards are still at the core of the city's life and development. According to the 1980 U.S. Census, 464,533 persons, or one in every six Chicagoans, resided within three blocks of the system.

Today, Chicago has once again discovered the value of many of the resources that enhance its quality of life. As with its lakefront and river, it has rediscovered the wonders of the boulevards.

**Life Along The Boulevards** is more than a plan for the boulevards. The plan promotes restoration of the boulevards as a means of stimulating neighborhood revitalization. It recognizes that the boulevards are a unique feature in the city's landscape and can anchor neighborhood revitalization efforts. There is substantial evidence and precedent that boulevard systems have a positive effect on the neighborhoods they traverse. Cities as diverse as Boston, Kansas City, Buffalo, Seattle and Minneapolis have rediscovered their boulevards and are investing in them. These cities, like Chicago, have done this not only to ensure that future genera-

tions are able to enjoy a legacy that past and current generations have cherished, but also to promote boulevards as an essential part of and stimulus for neighborhood development.

Several prime areas along Chicago's boulevards are already being redeveloped with inner-city shopping areas, new and rehabilitated housing, and the reuse and conversion of underutilized buildings and land. This revitalization has been fueled by small and large entrepreneurial ventures that recognize underserved markets within the inner city.

Similarly, neighborhood organizations and public agencies have once again turned their attention to the boulevards through such activities as the Third Ward Boulevard Plan, the Palmer Square restoration, the repair of Independence Square and its monument and the Garfield Boulevard planning efforts.

**B**oulevard restoration will affect neighborhoods in several important ways. Boulevards are and will continue to be anchors in the communities in which they exist. They are a focal point, not only for greenery, but for housing, recreation, transportation and pride. Significant improvements in the boulevards may give a community a starting point for revitalization and may motivate it to undertake additional improvements.

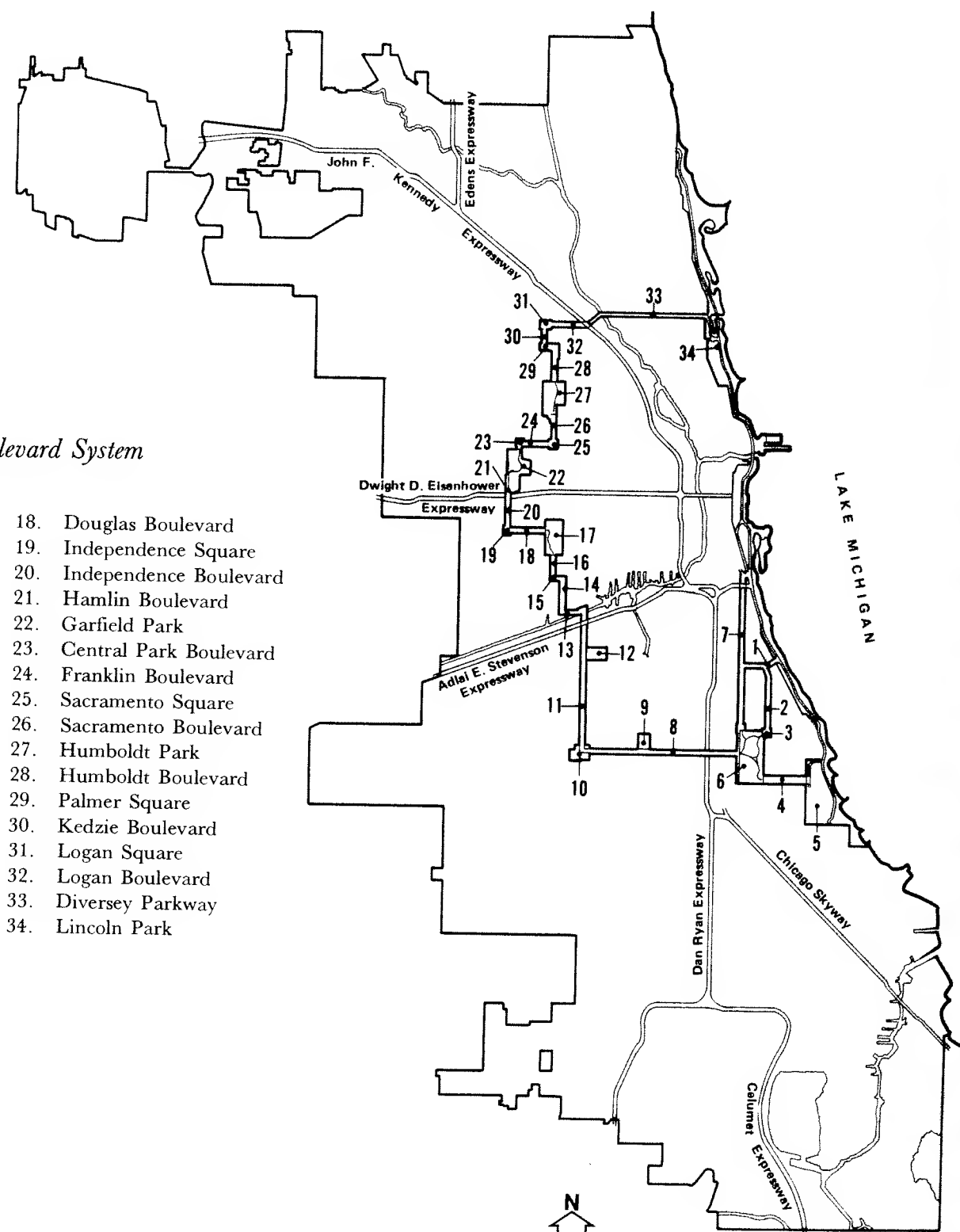
Furthermore, the boulevards are choice sites for housing and business opportunities. The housing located along the boulevards is of uncompromising quality and style. Historically boulevards have been choice sites for homes and businesses because of the amenities and greenery they provide. The return of landscaping, street furniture and new trees will give boulevard residents additional reasons for rehabilitation and maintaining their homes and businesses. Furthermore, the presence of landscaped areas has and will continue to increase the value of adjacent property.

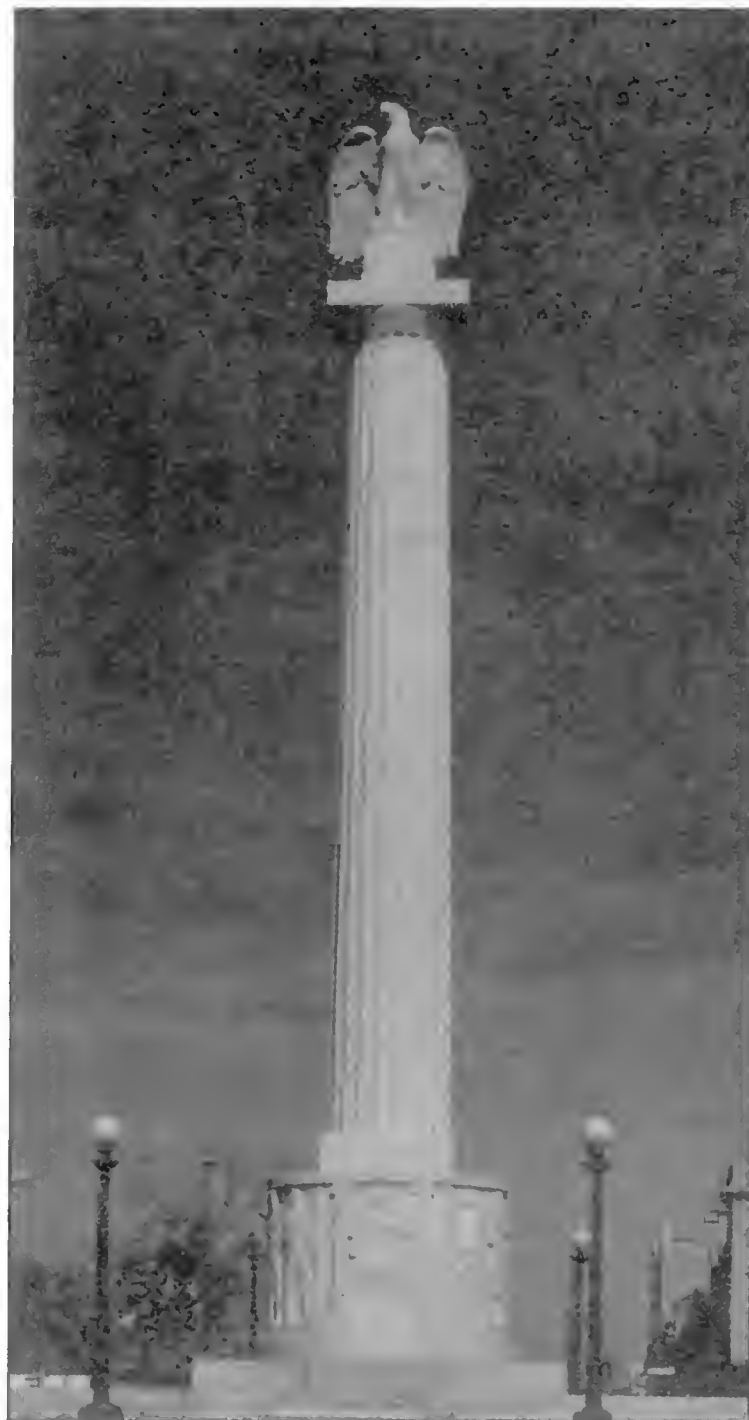
**Life Along the Boulevards** is a comprehensive plan intended to promote both public and private investment along Chicago's 28-mile system and in its surrounding communities. The plan presented here is the beginning of this restoration process. It documents conditions along the system and makes recommendations for its restoration and renewal. Solutions to typical boulevard problems are discussed, and site-specific design applications are illustrated with special attention to the needs of nearby communities.

The plan includes four key objectives for accomplishing the

### *Chicago's Primary Boulevard System*

- |                          |                            |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Oakwood Boulevard     | 18. Douglas Boulevard      |
| 2. Drexel Boulevard      | 19. Independence Square    |
| 3. Drexel Square         | 20. Independence Boulevard |
| 4. Midway Plaisance      | 21. Hamlin Boulevard       |
| 5. Jackson Park          | 22. Garfield Park          |
| 6. Washington Park       | 23. Central Park Boulevard |
| 7. King Drive            | 24. Franklin Boulevard     |
| 8. Garfield Boulevard    | 25. Sacramento Square      |
| 9. Sherman Park          | 26. Sacramento Boulevard   |
| 10. Gage Park            | 27. Humboldt Park          |
| 11. Western Boulevard    | 28. Humboldt Boulevard     |
| 12. McKinley Park        | 29. Palmer Square          |
| 13. 31st Boulevard       | 30. Kedzie Boulevard       |
| 14. California Boulevard | 31. Logan Square           |
| 15. 24th Boulevard       | 32. Logan Boulevard        |
| 16. Marshall Boulevard   | 33. Diversey Parkway       |
| 17. Douglas Park         | 34. Lincoln Park           |





*Logan Square's Illinois Centennial Column*

restoration of the boulevards and the communities through which they pass:

- **Increased Community Involvement**—community participation is essential to the boulevard restoration plan. The more people are aware of boulevard restoration, the more likely it is to have profound effects on their neighborhood. Prime opportunities for community development projects—residential, commercial, industrial and recreational in nature—are proposed as starting points for community redevelopment. These proposals should be considered by the different communities and implemented, if appropriate.
- **Compatible Development and Historic Preservation**—the biggest challenge in using the boulevards as catalysts for neighborhood revitalization will be to accommodate new development along them while maintaining their highly cherished character. Zoning and design reviews and controls are proposed for new development projects to ensure that they are sensitive to their setting and that their design strengthens the character of the boulevards.
- **A Stronger Recreational Linkage**—originally developed as passive recreational centers, the boulevards today are actively used for a wide range of leisure activities and special



*A young artist performing at the Palmer Square Art Fair*

events. Boulevard restoration projects should encourage appropriate recreational activities by providing space and amenities for them (i.e., pathways, benches, open play areas, etc.). More intense activities should be directed off the boulevards to facilities developed on adjacent vacant land. Finally, the importance of the boulevards to community life should be reinforced by hosting special events along them.

- A Systemwide Image for the Boulevards—Chicago needs to maintain the character and special identity of the boulevard system by enhancing its appearance as a continuous greenway. More than any other strategy, landscaping will improve the image and continuity of the connecting boulevards. In addition to planting trees, flowers and grass, however, capital investments will also be required to improve monuments, bridges, watering systems and roadways.

Strategies were developed for each of these objectives to address the problems and opportunities identified. Some of these can be done easily with little financial commitment; others will require money and, consequently, will need to meet the challenges of the priority-setting process of public and private budgets. But, as this plan indicates, investments in the boulevards, whether large or small, will be returned manyfold.

The plan presents comprehensive recommendations concerning the many issues and problems facing the boulevards. These are general in their nature and must be tailored to each individual community's interests and needs. More important, they must be prioritized by local planning efforts. They are presented to help stimulate this important work. Among those that seem to hold the most promise are the following:

- Pursue the development of detailed segment plans for the boulevards with community representatives.
- Set a goal of implementing every year two development opportunities highlighted in the plan.
- Encourage and support the formation of a private sector citizens advocacy group for the boulevards.
- Increase the number of events hosted along the boulevards as a way of broadening the public's awareness of the system.

- Modify the Planned Development section of the Zoning Ordinance to include a special boulevard provision.
- Charge the Department of Planning with examining the feasibility of systemwide provisions regulating building orientation, setbacks, parking areas, landscaping and curb cuts to make new development sensitive to the boulevard setting.
- Require that all new development on the boulevards include landscape treatments that enhance the character of the boulevards.
- Explore the benefits of local designation and/or listing on the National Register for Historic Places for the entire system or portions of it.
- Create a neighborhood recreational facility on vacant land adjacent to the boulevards.
- Encourage the trustees of the B.F. Ferguson Fund to create a new, heroic scale monument at an appropriate location on the boulevards.



## Chapter I      *Boulevards Then and Now*



*Drexel Boulevard, developed as part of the original system*

The total boulevard and parkway system within the city of Chicago can be grouped into three classifications of boulevards. These three classes have evolved over the early years of the development of the city. Most of these boulevards were developed in conjunction with parks; however, some were developed to encourage residential development or to facilitate travel between sections of the city.

The primary boulevard system is the composite of the originally conceived 1869-70 park system. These are generally the wider boulevards which still provide a continuous linkage between the inland parks and the lakefront. This group of boulevards is the focus of this study (see Map I-1).

The primary boulevard system is composed of 21 boulevard segments, six squares and seven connected inland parks. Of the seven parks, five are bisected by the boulevard system and the other two are adjacent to the system.

The longest boulevard segment is King Drive at 4.5 miles. The shortest is North Central Park Boulevard with a length of .09 miles. Collectively, the 28-mile system is a continuous greenway encircling the central section of the city.

The six squares located along the boulevards were designated at turning points within the system. They represent important focal points along the drive and act as neighborhood squares or gathering places where they have not been overly segmented as traffic islands.

It is estimated that the boulevards and squares contain some 540 acres of green space. The most common width of the boulevards within this group is 200 to 250 feet of right-of-way. The widest segment is the Midway Plaisance with a width of 750 feet. The narrowest section is Diversey Parkway with a 66

foot right-of-way. This segment although never properly developed as a boulevard has been grouped into the primary boulevard system because it was designated in the original concept plan for the boulevards and is an essential leg for completing the northern linkage with the lakefront parks.

The secondary boulevard grouping includes those boulevards, parkways, drives and, in some cases, streets which were conceived as boulevards and contain at least one green median. All were added subsequent to the originally conceived 1869-70 park and boulevard system. They may be contiguous with this system, other inland parks or isolated onto themselves.

The secondary system consists of 22 boulevards, parkways and streets which together amount to 14 miles. This grouping is characterized as having some greenway median still present from the early development of the streetway.

Most of the streets within this group are between 100 and 150 feet wide. However, the range is dramatic. The widest segment, Winneconna Parkway, measures 500 feet in width while the narrowest, Walden Parkway, is 40 feet wide. It has been estimated that a total of 90 acres of open space exist within this group of boulevards.

The boulevards in this group are generally short, the average length being only .65 miles. The longest is Ogden Boulevard at 2.31 miles. The shortest segment within this group is Campbell Park Drive at 0.11 miles in length.

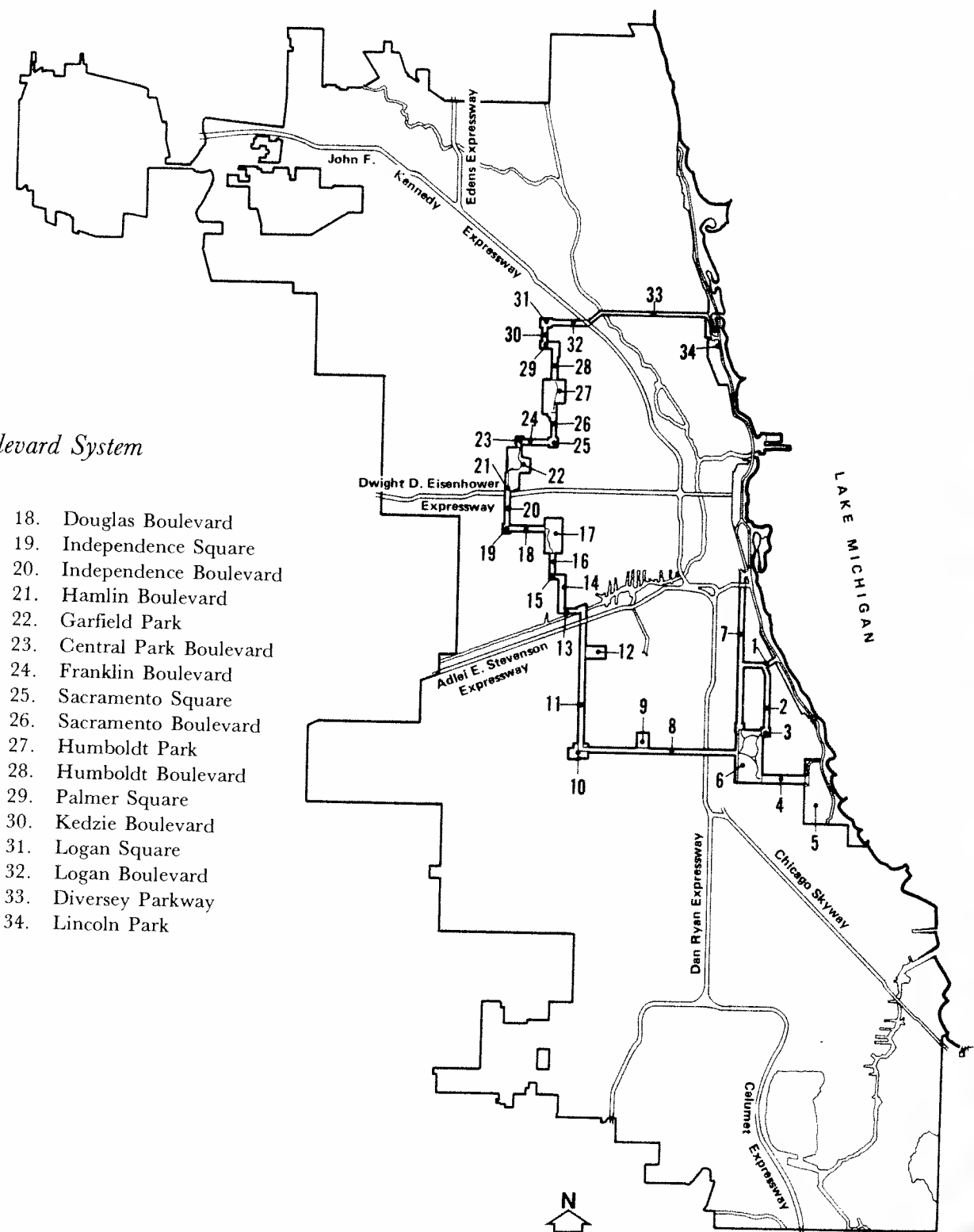
The tertiary boulevard grouping is a composite of those streetways which are designated boulevards or parkways but which do not have median strips. Most of these have, at best, wide, landscaped parkways.

The tertiary boulevard group consists of 25 designated boulevards, parkways and drives. Together this group totals 50 miles in length. They do not contain center medians and, for the most part, are unrecognizable from the normal streets of the city. This is not to belittle the streetways or suggest any decommissioning of them. On the contrary, many are historically important streetways and some spots along them are very attractive.

Most of these boulevard segments are between 66 and 80 feet wide, with the average being only 73 feet. It is estimated that about 150 acres of open space is present within this group of boulevards, mostly in the form of parkways. The longest segment within the group is Jackson Boulevard with a length of 7 miles. The shortest is Boulevard Way, a narrow street that in-

*Map I-1*  
*Chicago's Primary Boulevard System*

- |                          |                            |
|--------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. Oakwood Boulevard     | 18. Douglas Boulevard      |
| 2. Drexel Boulevard      | 19. Independence Square    |
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Olmsted, Jenney, Burnham and Jensen, fathers of Chicago's boulevards



The Midway Plaisance in 1910

tersects with Marshall Boulevard and with a length of 0.11 mile.

### *The Legacy: A Brief History of the Boulevards*

The history of Chicago's primary boulevards and parks has its roots in the early establishment of the city, which officially became incorporated in 1837. Soon afterwards, the City adopted the motto, *Urbs in Horto*, or "City Set in a Garden," to reflect the city's potential as the threshold to the fertile lands of the west and to establish its image.

At this time, Chicago had few public parks or plazas. The most notable was Michigan Avenue, the promenade street for the young city, and the adjacent public grounds extending east to the lake. Michigan Avenue was lined with honey locust trees on the lake side and with private residential gardens on the west. In 1839, the entire park system consisted of Dearborn Park, a half-mile square park located at the current site of the Chicago Cultural Center. Washington Square was constructed three years later, and was followed at intervals by Jefferson, Union, Ellis, and Vernon parks.

### *Creating the Vision*

In 1849, John S. Wright, one of the city's early boosters and developers, envisioned the need for a system of boulevards encircling the city:

I foresee a time, not very distant, when Chicago will need for its fast increasing population a park or parks in each division (referring to the south, west and north sides of the city). Of these parks I have a vision. They are all improved and connected with a wide avenue extending to and along the Lake shore on the north and south, and so surrounding the city with a magnificent chain of parks and parkways that have not their equal in the World.

In 1866, the *Chicago Times* published a plan based on the concept presented by John S. Wright. The *Times* plan proposed a continuous encirclement of the city with a 2,240-acre park, 14 miles long by one-quarter mile wide, and boulevards lining each side of the park strip. Although the plan was never implemented, it did provide a foundation for a greenway system, which in three short years would be authorized by State legislation.

**The Vision Becomes Reality.** In 1869, the State of Illinois passed three pieces of legislation creating the South, West and North (Lincoln) Park districts. The legislation was drafted in 1868 by Ezra B. McCagg, a wealthy lawyer, and contained many of the ideas promoted by his friend Frederick Law Olmsted in the design of Central Park in New York City and in the development of suburban Riverside, Illinois. The legislation not only outlined the powers and duties of the park districts, but also detailed the location of the parks and connecting boulevards (Map I-2). The proposed parks, parkways, boulevards and adjacent land uses were placed under the control of the three park districts. The West Park District was given the power to regulate adjacent land uses within 400 feet of the boulevards and to establish building setbacks at 50 feet. The legislation also empowered all of the districts to levy special taxes and to review the designs of all buildings to be constructed adjacent to the boulevards.

By establishing both the districts' controls and the physical environment, the legislation illustrated the foresight of planning in Chicago. Although the boulevard system and park districts were located far beyond the city limits at the time, the legislation anticipated the growth of Chicago and the need for good thoroughfares to traverse the city. The system's layout, therefore, was intended to promote orderly expansion.

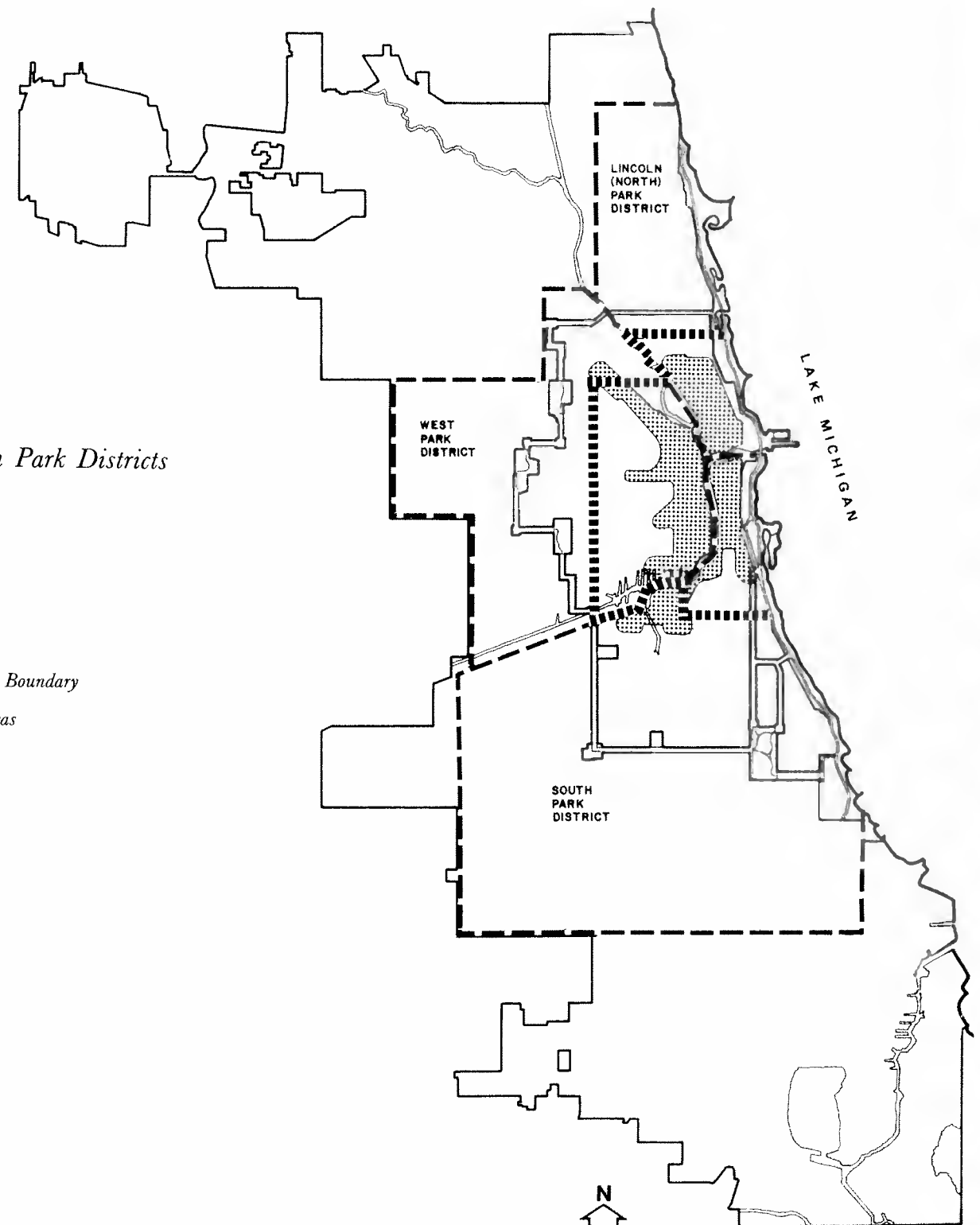
**The Boulevards Appear on the Prairie.** The design and implementation of the South and West Park districts occurred almost immediately. The Lincoln Park District, however, was tied up in litigation over its taxing authority and thus did little to develop parks and boulevards during the first few years after its establishment.

In 1870, the South Park District commissioned the firm of Olmsted and Vaux to design its park and boulevard system. Frederick Law Olmsted, with Calvert Vaux, had designed Central Park in New York City in 1858. Later in 1866, they formed the design partnership of Olmsted, Vaux & Company, Landscape Architects, which became the most influential firm in shaping American cities during the turn of the century.

Olmsted and Vaux's designs for Jackson and Washington parks, which were presented in 1871, included two connections—one via Midway Plaisance and the other a waterway connection from the lake through Jackson Park to Washington Park. According to Olmsted, Jackson and Washington parks were designed as "people's parks," with picturesque landscaping and lagoons providing recreational opportunities for all Chicagoans.

*Map I-2*  
*South, West and North Park Districts*

- Legend*
- 1860 City Limits
  - - - 1869 Park District Boundary
  - ■ ■ 1860's Built-Up Areas





Frederick Olmsted certainly was a prime mover of the boulevard system. He worked with Ezra B. McCagg in drafting and passing the legislation and designed the south segment. He also was a close friend and business acquaintance of William Shaler Cleveland (the landscape engineer who implemented Olmsted's plans) and William Le Baron Jenney (the designer of the West Park District), both of whom had a great respect for his work.

Although the South Park District (1872-74) appointed Horace William Shaler Cleveland as a landscape architect and charged him with the implementation of Olmsted and Vaux's plans, he was hampered by the park commissioners' desires to economize.

The West Park District selected William Le Baron Jenney in 1870 to design its inland parks and connective boulevards. He met and became friends with Frederick Law Olmsted, at the siege of Vicksburg during the Civil War. After the war, the two maintained regular and frequent professional contacts. Since Jenney was not a landscape engineer, he looked to Olmsted for most of his ideas concerning the design of Garfield, Douglas and Humboldt parks.

When Jenney presented his plans for the west parks and boulevards in 1871, he proposed a formal, regimented planting of trees that was popular with boulevards. The parks were more informal and designed to contrast with the formality of the boulevards. He also created squares (Independence, Gar-

field, Sacramento, Palmer and Logan) at the boulevard turning points. They provided recreational and aesthetic accents within informal parklike settings. Again these acted as foils to the formal elegance of the connecting boulevards. Jenney resigned from his position with the West Chicago Park District in 1874 and was succeeded by his assistant, Oscar F. Dubuis.

In 1881, Dubuis was promoted to the position of engineer for the district and given the responsibility for continuing the development of the district's parks and boulevards. According to the records of the district, Dubuis was faced with a multitude of inherent problems and conditions in the boulevard lands that demanded creative and technical solutions. Dubuis' response was to engineer and install a drainage system to replace the open ditches, and to suggest the installation of lighting along the boulevard squares and at entrances to the parks. From 1883 to 1884, he initiated a block-by-block "street washer" system along the boulevards for irrigating the medians and watering the graveled streets to hold down dust. Dubuis also engineered a gas line layout that avoided segmenting the medians and minimized the destruction of trees.

Dubuis prepared plans for the Southwest Boulevard (today, Marshall, 24th, California and 31st boulevards) in 1888 that considerably altered the designs of William Le Baron Jenney. His design for Humboldt Boulevard was similar to Jenney's plans, but differed in the planting layout. The principal difference was Dubuis' deletion of the of the enlarged squares at the turning points along the system.

The legal challenges to the creation of the Lincoln Park District were resolved in 1875, and the district was empowered to levy taxes. At this point the district was in a position to widen Diversey Parkway. However, commercial and residential development along the street had progressed too far to permit the construction of a boulevard. Diversey Parkway remains the one exception to the plan as originally conceived.

To ensure that the boulevards were pleasure drives, speed limits for the south boulevards were set at a maximum of eight miles per hour in 1871, and all vehicles "transporting merchandise, commercial goods, building materials, manure, soil, and other articles" were banned from the boulevards in 1873.

The intent of the system, however, was not only to provide a "pleasure drive," but also to attract real estate development. The boulevards quickly became extremely popular recreational, social and transportation features of the city. They also drew upscale real estate. In 1876, just eight years after the initial



*Drexel Boulevard at 39th St. circa 1891*

legislation was passed, the South District added public phaetons (carriages) along the boulevards to permit greater access to the park areas.

**The Chicago Fire and Its Phoenix.** On Sunday, October 8, 1871, all of the plans for improvement of the parks and boulevards came to a sudden halt as the Great Fire destroyed the city from 12th Street to Fullerton, consuming some 1,688 acres. Rival cities quickly noted that Chicago was forever doomed, but within a few months, boulevard improvements resumed, and the city was on the rebound. Population growth during this period was dramatic, jumping from 298,977 in 1870 to 503,298 in 1880 and to 1,099,850 in 1890. Much of this growth was occurring along the boulevards and within their adjacent communities.

By 1893 Chicago was in its full glory. The City hosted the World Columbian Exposition, which commemorated the 400th anniversary of the European discovery of America. Daniel Burnham, who was placed in charge of selecting the principal architects, transformed a swamp area into a fantasyland with Frederick Law Olmsted serving as the Consulting Landscape Architect. In only six months, the Exposition drew 2.5 million visitors to see products, inventions and even freaks assembled by forty-six foreign nations and most of the states of the Union. Chicago showcased its assets, including the newly constructed Jackson Park and the Midway Plaisance, the site of the exposition.

Almost overnight, Chicago became the best known city in the world. It set the standard for public planning at the turn of the century. In fact, Chicago's park and boulevard system inspired the development of the Greater Boston Metropolitan Park Commission, Kansas City's parks and boulevards, and the open space system of Washington, D.C. Cities entered the 20th Century with a renewed interest in creating new parks, improving existing urban spaces, providing recreational facilities and program activities, and planning for an orderly development of cities. They were in no small part inspired by Chicago's exposition and its foresight in developing the parks and boulevard system.

### *Chicago Establishes Its Own Style*

The development and improvement of boulevards and connected parks continued during the early years of the 20th century. Segments of the system that had not been developed were

completed between 1908 and 1915. The South Park District completed Western Boulevard, and the West Park District undertook the improvement of the Southwest Boulevard (today Marshall, 24th, California and 31st boulevards) and Central Boulevard (today Franklin and Sacramento boulevards). New construction and improvements during this period were especially influenced by the City Beautiful Movement, Jens Jensen's Prairie-Style landscapes, and Daniel Burnham's *Plan of Chicago*.

**City Beautiful Movement.** Continuing to be influenced by the City Beautiful Movement, civic-minded citizens donated monuments and public art for incorporation into the system. These artworks included the installation of the Independence

Monument and Fountain in Independence Square in 1901, the equestrian statue of George Washington in Washington Square in 1904, and the William McKinley Monument at McKinley Park in 1905.

**Prairie-Style Landscapes.** Major park restoration and expansion included the development of active recreational facilities and the introduction of native prairie landscapes. In 1905, Jens Jensen was appointed Superintendent of the West Chicago Park District and later landscape consultant to the district. Since his responsibilities were to undertake a major repair and updating of the west parks, including Humboldt, Douglas and Garfield parks, his naturalistic prairie-style landscapes dominate the west parks. In an interview with Sidney J.



*Chicago showcased the new Midway Plaisance at the 1893 World's Fair*



*The West Parks street cleaning crews, circa 1920*



*Decorated steel bridge at Independence Boulevard*

Harris in the 1940's, Jensen stated:

In the old days, we were busy imitating the European estates and formal gardens. We imported rare plants that soon perished. But all the while, we were ignoring our native trees and flowers. These I took and used for our parks—the beauty spots of the New World.

During this period, Jensen designed the Marshall Boulevard entry into Douglas Park and the Sacramento Boulevard median at Humboldt Park. His crowning naturalistic landscape in Chicago is Columbus Park (1916–18), which was developed as a prairie landscape with native trees.

**Burnham's Plan of Chicago.** In 1909, Daniel Burnham, the principal designer of the Columbian Exposition, and Edward H. Bennett published *The Plan of Chicago*. The plan worked from the existing boulevard system and proposed its extension.

Two of the plan's greatest achievements were the creation of the city's lakefront chain of parks and Lake Shore Drive. With the completion of Lake Shore Drive, the chain of greenways encircling the city was firmly established. The plan also proposed the northward extension of Grand Boulevard (now Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive) and the expansion of the boulevard system with an outer ring (which was never implemented).

### *The Nineteenth-Century Boulevards Meet a Twentieth-Century World*

**Efficiency vs. Beautification.** During the years 1914–18, attitudes toward American cities began to change as the grandiose designs of ideal cities were replaced by efficient and functional plans. The emphasis was on the workable city.

As a result of this concept, Chicago's mile grid pattern developed as the city adjusted to the increased use of the automobile. The roadways of the boulevards were paved and improved lighting was installed. In 1921, automatic traffic towers known as "dummy policemen" were constructed at busy intersections along the boulevards to regulate the flow of traffic and improve safety. During these years, the boulevard system was incorporated into the overall grid of the city, curved drives were straightened, medians were bisected and parking bays were developed.

During the 1920s, a number of fashionable apartment buildings were constructed along the boulevards—often at the



intersections of major streets. The boulevards were no longer the domain of mansions. Over the years, these larger buildings came to establish a visual "frame" for the system. Apartment buildings were also built adjacent to some of the squares in the system, and are especially noticeable today near Logan, Washington and Drexel squares.

Between 1900 and 1930, a recreation movement was also in vogue. Classes, lectures, recitals and games were scheduled in parks and fieldhouses. Instead of retaining their picturesque design as a place to stroll, the parks, like the boulevards, became more programmed and utilitarian.

**Consolidation—The Chicago Park District Is Created.** In 1933, the operation and management of the separate park districts throughout the city were consolidated into the Chicago Park District. Major repairs and capital improvements to the system were undertaken as part of the revitalization efforts of the Federal Works Progress Administration (WPA) during the Great Depression, and landscaping, creating sculptures, and painting murals in fieldhouses became a source of jobs for the unemployed.

**Deterioration.** A new era for Chicago and other American cities was ushered in by the sudden prosperity brought on by World War II (1939–45) and its aftermath. As the automobile became more prevalent and suburban developments increased, investment in the older central areas of the city declined. Socially prominent, upper-middle-class property owners had already begun their exodus from the South Side. As the wealthy left, their mansions, row houses, and apartments provided growing room for the booming black community. Homes were divided and redivided to house the many where few had lived before. The 1950s witnessed the start of expressway construction in Chicago, which not only took traffic off the boulevards, but also moved investment away from the adjacent neighborhoods and into the suburbs.

**Urban Renewal.** By 1954, the deterioration of some areas was critical. The Urban Renewal Program—a massive slum clearance program—was created to respond to the situation. Although the program created displacement and other serious problems for some of Chicago's neighborhoods, it was beneficial to the boulevards. It was responsible for expanding Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive northward and for improving sections of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Douglas and Drexel boulevards and the Midway Plaisance.

**The City of Chicago Becomes Custodian.** In 1959, jurisdiction for the boulevards was transferred from the Park District to the City to simplify and consolidate functions. Transferred along with the lands were the operational sections and the district's police force. Today, the system is operated by the City of Chicago's Department of Streets and Sanitation. The Bureau of Street Operations and Beautification is directly responsible for its day-to-day maintenance and management. The Department of Public Works implements improvements to the system, and the Department of Planning is responsible for overall planning. Although budgetary cuts have restricted both major and minor improvements, the Department of Planning is now seeking public and private sector funding to implement the restoration plans outlined in *Life Along the Boulevards*. These plans have been developed with a view of the historical significance of the system balanced against modern needs.

## The Boulevard Plan

This plan balances two inherently different aspects of the boulevards. First and foremost, the boulevards are part of the neighborhoods. Most people do not experience the boulevards

as a system, but rather know them as neighborhood features. They are the drive home after work. They are playgrounds, places to walk or ride a bike and vistas of trees and greenery. Consequently, a boulevard plan must be specific to each neighborhood.

On the other hand, the boulevards are also a part of a system that ties the city together. They are a destination point for residents from all over the city—for their Sunday drives or for recreational opportunities. Functioning in this manner, the boulevards need to have a distinct identity as a system or as a whole.

The plan includes four objectives to cover both of these goals.



*Paving the boulevards circa 1920*



*The Burnham Plan*

The first goal, community planning and development, has three major objectives:

### *Increased Community Involvement*

No plan will be effective until it is "owned" by the people it affects. The residents along the boulevards must be committed to the efforts for them to be successful. The City cannot act alone. Likewise, efforts specifically targeted for the boulevards must be coordinated with other neighborhood improvements and development opportunities.

Numerous neighborhood groups and block clubs along the system already have demonstrated this commitment. In recent

years, neighborhood organizations have lobbied for funds to rehabilitate boulevard segments, formed public-private partnerships, and implemented programs for planting, beautification and clean-up. These successes must be repeated by other community-based organizations.

In addition, there are major opportunities for development. National retailers and others have rediscovered the overlooked markets in the neighborhoods. They, along with others, have realized the value of the amenities provided by the boulevards. Shopping areas, new and rehabilitated housing, and previously underutilized buildings and land that have been converted and reused are already part of the revitalization of several prime areas along the boulevards.



*Drexel Square in 1954*

This section of the plan discusses some of the significant issues that the different neighborhoods must face. It describes the current activities that neighborhood organizations have undertaken. And it identifies some of the major development opportunities.

### *Compatible Development and Historic Preservation*

The visual effect and character of the neighborhoods fronting on the boulevards should be maintained by encouraging new development to blend in with existing uses, architecture and densities. Unlike physical improvements that are designed to improve particular aspects of the boulevard system (such as landscaping, roadway alignment, etc.), architectural improvements will be guided by the Chicago Zoning Ordinance. This study recommends that a boulevard provision be added to the Planned Development section of the zoning ordinance to increase the city's control over the design of new development. Similarly, systemwide provisions for building orientation, setbacks, parking areas, landscaping and curb cuts are also proposed.

Because of the national and local significance of the entire boulevard system, the integrity of its original design is one of its greatest assets. The Commission on Chicago Landmarks is in the process of surveying the entire city to identify buildings and sites of historic importance. The bulk of this survey is completed for the boulevards and has been mapped. This information represents a valuable data base for neighborhoods adjacent to the boulevard system.

### *A Stronger Recreational Linkage*

Although the boulevard system was originally designed for passive recreational uses, it has become an actively used recreational system in and of itself. Many of the boulevards are used appropriately and sections of the system support a variety of city- and neighborhood-sponsored events and festivals. Numerous other activities, however, are incompatible with the design of the medians. As a result, parts of the system have and are continuing to deteriorate because of these uses.

In order to maintain and enhance the recreational uses of boulevard medians and parkways while maintaining their greenway character, numerous adjustments should be made. Landscape improvements for the boulevards should be designed to encourage appropriate recreational activity such as

biking or jogging and to reduce more intense activities that damage the greenways. Intense recreational uses should instead be directed to the major regional parks located along the system or to new parks that should be developed on vacant land adjacent to the boulevards.

### *A Systemwide Image of the Boulevards*

The second major goal of the plan deals with the systemwide image for the boulevards. This part of the plan presents an assessment of the condition of the boulevards and guidelines on how planning and other improvements should be done.

In restoring the boulevards, Chicago needs to maintain the character and special identity of the system by enhancing its appearance as a continuous greenway. More than any other strategy, landscaping will improve the image and continuity of the connecting boulevards. Formal, informal and parklike plantings can be combined to form the basis of this strategy. Distinctive landscape treatments for boulevard entrances, intersections with other streets, parks and monuments will further distinguish the boulevard system from other city streets. Similarly, distinctive improvements can be made to transit stops, at traffic signals and for parking areas to enhance this image.

Along with these improvements, the City's management and maintenance of the system can be improved and better coordinated. Currently, city departments and other agencies share responsibility for the management of the boulevards. The parks, landscaped medians, monuments, the watering system, roadways, curbs, and historic, commercial and urban renewal districts are all critical features of the boulevards; yet, each is maintained and improved by different public and private agencies needing to coordinate with one another. Initial steps have already been taken by the City to better fund, coordinate and target its efforts—as the renovation work along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive demonstrates.

In order to implement the proposed strategies outlined in the preceding sections, alternative public and private funding sources must be found. Different aspects of the restoration program must be marketed to various City agencies, departments, aldermen and private sector investors. Consequently, the plan ends with a final chapter on implementation.



*Garfield Boulevard in 1954*



## Chapter II     *Increased Community Involvement*



*Graystones fronting Dr. Martin Luther King Dr.*

**L**ike other cities, Chicago is as strong as its neighborhoods—particularly the strength of the ties that residents have to these areas. Chicago is fortunate in that it traditionally has enjoyed strong neighborhood allegiances coming from ethnic, geographic, historical and economic identities.

The boulevards were originally built as one means of creating this type of special identity for areas of the city that were then undeveloped. Since the city lacks hills and other easily identifiable geographic features, the landscape architects who designed the boulevards wanted to give a special sense of place with which people could identify. Just as current developers choose themes for their developments, so the earlier developers used the monuments and squares of the boulevards to give this sense of neighborhood.

As opposed to our modern freeways that create barriers and boundaries between neighborhoods, the boulevards now, as in the past, can create a sense of place and identity. They can be the front door to neighborhoods as opposed to the by-passes around them. Instead of encouraging people to drive faster, they can encourage people to slow down so that they can enjoy the neighborhood through which they are driving. The boulevards can encourage people to look at the surrounding neighborhoods and say, "I would like to live here."

But this will not happen automatically. It will not happen by simply spending money refurbishing these streets. It can only happen if boulevard restoration is part of larger community planning efforts involving residents and neighborhood organizations.

Each neighborhood has different development needs and

priorities; consequently, the boulevards will play a different role in each. For example, Little Village and Pilsen have shortages of open space; consequently, it is important to consider Marshall Boulevard as an element in the open space and recreational plan for these areas. In contrast, other neighborhoods in the South Lawndale area need industrial development. The large tracts of open land adjoining Thirty-First Boulevard offer opportunities for an industrial park with the boulevard as an appropriate amenity.

Each neighborhood must develop its own goals for the boulevards. This chapter discusses the neighborhoods that line the boulevards, some of their needs, and the current efforts underway to use the boulevards as a means of achieving some of these neighborhood goals. It ends with recommendations on how to foster further work. Some of the important considerations, such as recreation and open space, are discussed at length elsewhere in this plan.

## *The Neighborhoods Along the Boulevards*

Twenty-five community areas with at least 34 smaller neighborhoods line the boulevard system (Map II-1). These communities represent almost a complete cross-section of the city's neighborhoods. There are rich, poor, and middle-class communities; Black, Puerto Rican, Mexican, Irish, and Polish neighborhoods; stable, declining and growing areas.

### *Who lives along the boulevards?*

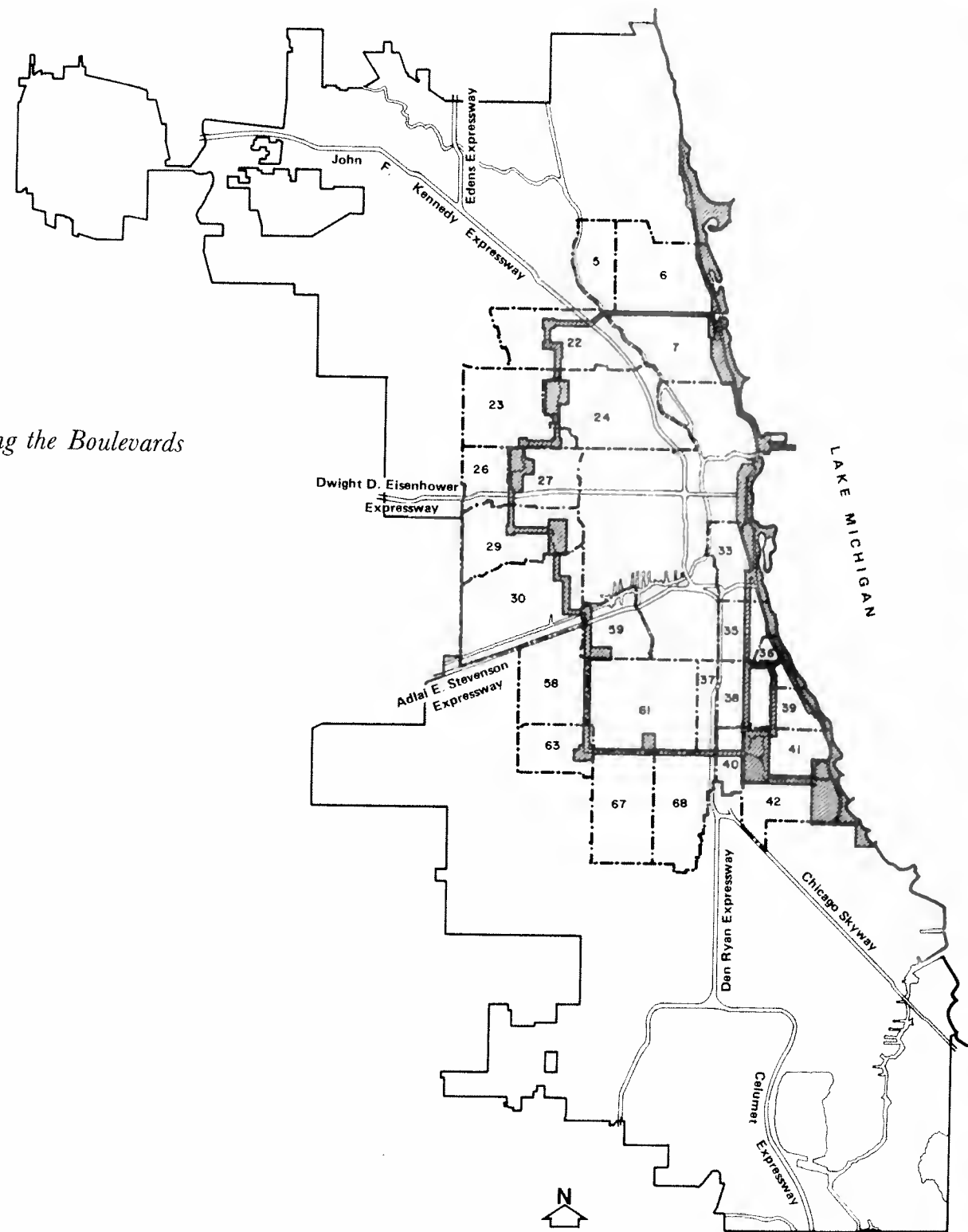
According to the 1980 U.S. Census, 464,533 or one in every six Chicagoans, lived within three blocks of the boulevards. These residents make up 169,058 households with an average 2.7 persons residing in each unit.

Of the 464,533 persons living along the boulevards, 248,468 or 53.5% are black, 156,454 or 33.7% are white, and 59,620 or 12.8% belong to other racial groups. Of these persons, 90,247 or 19.4% are of Spanish origin. Children under 14 years old make up 118,188 or 25.4% of residents along the boulevards.

As residents become involved in planning for their neighborhoods, it will be critical for them to collect and consider even more detailed demographic information to know who lives in the neighborhood. This information opens up windows on important issues. For example, knowing the number

*Map II-1  
Community Areas Along the Boulevards*

Near South Side (CA 33)  
Douglas (CA 35)  
Oakland (CA 36)  
Grand Boulevard (CA 38)  
Kenwood (CA 39)  
Hyde Park (CA 41)  
Woodlawn (CA 42)  
Fuller Park (CA 37)  
Washington Park (CA 40)  
New City (CA 61)  
Englewood (CA 68)  
West Englewood (CA 67)  
Gage Park (CA 63)  
Brighton Park (CA 58)  
McKinley Park (CA 59)  
South Lawndale (CA 30)  
North Lawndale (CA 29)  
West Garfield Park (CA 26)  
East Garfield Park (CA 27)  
Humboldt Park (CA 23)  
West Town (CA 24)  
Logan Square (CA 22)  
North Center (CA 5)  
Lake View (CA 6)  
Lincoln Park (CA 7)







*Residential area on Garfield Boulevard*

of young people who are likely to be starting families over the next five to ten years or the number of middle-aged people who will become older over that same period will give insights into the type of services generally and the role that open space like the boulevards in particular may play in neighborhood life. In the former case, the neighborhood expecting increasing numbers of children should consider the needs for play lots and active recreation. With an increasing elderly population, the boulevards might be considered prime sites for more passive recreational opportunities.

The question of who lives in a neighborhood is bigger than just counting who lives there now. The planning process also has to consider who is moving in or moving out: what demographers call migration. The 1985 midyear census update indicated a 0.62 percent increase in population for the community areas along the boulevard system. While the South Lawndale Community Area experienced the highest increase, at 12.63 percent, the Washington Park Community Area showed the greatest loss, with a 16.29 percent decrease. Recent population increases have been attributed to urban trends, reinvestment in and conservation of existing housing, higher birth rates, and migration trends into the urban centers.

For individual neighborhoods, it will be important to know not just these rough figures, but who is moving in and who is moving out. Are they similar to the current residents or are they different? This information will help identify some of the key goals of the plan. Most neighborhoods are concerned about stability. Stability typically means a healthy diversity among income groups, age groups, family sizes, etc. The boulevards, and the image that they can project for a neighborhood, may help in achieving these types of goals.

### *What is the housing like?*

The majority of the boulevards were designed as grand residential streets. An important element that residents and community organizations will be concerned about in their planning process is housing. The housing stock—the number, size and quality of the homes and apartments—is closely connected to the population goals discussed above.

There are 178,893 housing units lining the boulevard system according to the 1980 census. However, only 19.9 percent of these were owner-occupied. This owner-occupancy rate, which is considerably lower than the city's overall rate of 38.9 per-

cent, can be generally attributed to the predominance of multiple-unit housing and apartment buildings. Condominium or cooperative units comprise 5,988, or 3.3 percent, of the housing units along the boulevards. These are concentrated along those segments adjoining the lakefront parks.

Although in some neighborhoods, the lack of home ownership does not pose serious problems, in others it can be an indicator of serious problems with absentee and slum landlords. In general the City of Chicago needs to foster more home ownership—particularly among middle and lower income families. This will help protect these families against inflating land prices and will consequently foster greater stability in neighborhoods.

The character and quality of the housing stock varies substantially from neighborhood to neighborhood. The 1979 median housing values varied dramatically for owner-occupied units. Of those that were reported, the area within three blocks of Midway Plaisance had the highest median value, at \$136,290. Marshall, 24th, California and 31st boulevards as a group had the lowest median value at \$21,294. Overall, the calculated median value of owner-occupied homes along the boulevard system was \$51,100, which was \$3,900, or about 8 percent, above the City's median value of \$47,200.

There is no easy way of assessing housing in a neighborhood except with a careful housing survey. But the City's best estimate is that up to 5.7% of the housing units along the boulevards are in need of major repair and 0.4% are abandoned.

In some of the neighborhoods along the boulevards housing is a critical problem that will not be solved easily. The cost of housing varies substantially in the neighborhoods along the boulevards, but even where it costs the least it is still out of reach for many of Chicago's residents. The City is actively looking at solutions to these problems through a variety of efforts including methods of reducing the costs.

Although clearly only one small piece in a complicated puzzle, the boulevards may play a role in improving housing in the neighborhoods. As is evident in many parts of the boulevard system, the housing along the boulevards has acted as an anchor. While housing away from the boulevards has deteriorated, that along the boulevards has remained in better condition.

This same factor may be used by neighborhoods as a method

of stimulating reinvestment in housing or even possibly attracting new housing. In some situations, a strong boulevard plan may encourage home buyers and investors to put money back into this housing which in turn may influence perceptions of housing off the boulevards. Likewise the boulevards also offer opportunities for subsidized housing or public housing. The packaging and promotion of housing and housing sites as part of efforts to restore the boulevards will help keep strong housing in the neighborhoods.

Finally, some neighborhoods along the boulevards face the issue of rapid housing investments—what is sometimes known as “gentrification.” In these neighborhoods, increasing land values may make rents and housing more expensive than the current residents can afford. Residents may feel that they are being “pushed out.” Here again community planning efforts can help assure that housing diversity is maintained and encouraged.

### *Are the institutions strong?*

Another important factor in community life is its institutions—churches, schools, hospitals, etc. These elements of community life are closely associated with the boulevards. A total of 56 places of worship, 51 schools, 9 hospitals, and 14 other community centers or clubs line the boulevards today. While many of the older buildings housing these facilities were constructed along the system because of its prestige and traditional function as a community center, current owners have made innovative adjustments. An old factory, for example, has been converted to a technical school at one site.

The presence of the boulevards in a neighborhood can help assure the stability of these types of institutions. It provides visible, attractive sites for them.

These institutions, however, may raise other types of planning issues. For example, the location of schools will influence how the pathways along the boulevards and the crossings are designed to assure safe passage for the children. Or the presence of churches may raise special issues of parking on days when there are services. Methods of managing these problems are discussed in the following chapter.

### *How can the shopping and commercial areas be strengthened?*

In most cases, neighborhood shopping and commercial areas intersect rather than directly front on the boulevards, but these points of intersection can be important.

The strength and quality of shopping streets will be as important to local planning efforts as the boulevards themselves. Like the boulevards, they are the most visible parts of the neighborhood. They create the image or impression that influences potential investors.

As discussed with the issue of housing, a plan that uses the

boulevards and its restoration as one of the center pieces of neighborhood revitalization will assist in strengthening these adjoining commercial areas. It will provide an incentive for other investment. However, it can only assist. The plan also must directly address these areas by promoting local businessmen associations, assuring convenient parking and initiating other activities that will directly strengthen commercial areas.

Where commercial areas directly front on the boulevards, it will be important to assure that the design of the buildings and particularly the signage fits with the design of the boulevards. A lot of hard work on the part of the community in restoring its boulevards can be undermined by poorly designed or placed



*Humboldt Boulevard, neighborhood children planting trees*

signs that destroy the look the community wants. These issues are also discussed in the next chapter in design controls.

*What can be done about vacant lots?*

Vacant lots, particularly the small scattered ones that are like missing teeth, present serious problems in many of Chicago's neighborhoods. In the immediate or short-term, they are a problem because they are sites for fly-dumping and abandoned cars. They are difficult to mow and maintain. And consequently they tend to blight neighborhoods. Their reuse also presents long-term problems since they are often too small for

economically feasible development. They also often involve ownership problems that make reuse expensive.

The extent and seriousness of the problem varies in the neighborhoods along the boulevards. The boulevards themselves have not escaped this problem. Land vacancy rates along the system vary greatly. Vacancy is as low as 0.0% along some boulevard segments (i.e. Kedzie Boulevard and Palmer Square), and as high as 40% along Oakwood Boulevard. See Table II-1. However, the neighborhoods affected by high land vacancy are also among those most active in organizing to tackle both the short-term maintenance and long-term reuse problems presented by vacant land.

The problems of vacant lots and alternative remedies were presented in detail in the report of the Vacant Land Committee of Mayor Harold Washington's Task Force on Neighborhood Land-Use. This report is a useful guide for neighborhood organizations tackling vacant land problems along the boulevards.

In the short-term, it will be important to consider ways of assuring that currently empty land is clean and respectable. This takes the combined energy of both the City and community. In the long-term, it will be important to encourage development that is appropriate or compatible to reuse this land. Some of that basic framework can be done by community organizations. It is one of the core issues for any neighborhood plan along the boulevards.

**Table II-1. Vacant Land Along the Boulevards**

Boulevard Segment	Vacant Land (%)
1. Oakwood Boulevard	40.0
2. Drexel Boulevard	15.0
3. Midway Plaisance	0.0
4. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive	3.0
5. Garfield Boulevard	6.0
6. Western Boulevard	2.0
7. 31st Boulevard	72.0
8. California Boulevard	28.0
9. 24th Boulevard	4.5
10. Marshall Boulevard	12.7
11. Douglas Boulevard	10.0
12. Independence Boulevard	16.2
13. Hamlin Boulevard	10.7
14. Central Park Boulevard	7.9
15. Franklin Boulevard	25.0
16. Sacramento Boulevard	1.0
17. Humboldt Boulevard	6.0
18. Palmer Square	0.0
19. Kedzie Boulevard	0.0
20. Logan Boulevard	0.0
21. Diversey Parkway	0.0

Vacant land estimates are based on linear measurements from maps, with deductions for public rights-of-way, and on windshield surveys.



*Vacant lots present an opportunity for infill housing*

*Is there a chance to increase jobs in the neighborhood?*

People like to live near their place of work and the presence of businesses and factories in a neighborhood adds to its stability. The boulevards were the front door of a number of the city's big employers. Some of those are gone, such as International Harvester and Sears; however, some still remain.

More important, the boulevards and the community planning for their restoration can help promote the reinvestment in jobs. With the increase in technology that requires businesses to compete for a more highly educated and skilled work force, companies are very aware of how much the setting of a factory influences the work force it can attract. To know that their investment in a new or expanded facility is part of a larger plan that assures the attractiveness of the entire neighborhood is a strong incentive for companies.

*What other issues must be considered to plan a neighborhood?*

The above items are only some of the issues that all the neighborhoods will have in common. Each neighborhood will have to come up with its own list and its own priorities. Others are likely to include such items as:

- Public transportation. A good transit system gives residents the ability to move around their own area and access to jobs elsewhere.
- Public safety. The issues of police protection and gang crime are as critical to the use of the boulevards as they are to the general conditions of the neighborhoods.

While this plan can provide an overall framework within which the individual neighborhoods can do their thinking, finally it must be the residents themselves that tackle how these issues are resolved. Many neighborhoods along the boulevards have already started this process. The next section describes the community areas through which the boulevards run and the activities underway in these areas.

*Communities and Their Efforts along the Boulevards*

Community organizations, block clubs and even individual citizens have already begun important efforts related to the boulevards. Some have organized comprehensive planning efforts—bringing together all of the organizations and important actors of the area. Others have taken on smaller scale or more immediate activities to improve the boulevards. In addition, some aldermen have focused street improvements and other City efforts on the boulevards.

The following description of the communities along the boulevards is intended to give some notion of the breadth and

character of the activities already underway. It is not intended to be comprehensive, but provide some notion of the types of activities and the excitement with which the boulevards are being approached. Communities are listed in the order they would be encountered starting from the entrance to the system at King Drive (See Map II-1).

*Near South Side (CA 33)*

The near South Side community is crossed by the northern section of Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. It is an area dominated by non-residential land uses such as wholesale, industrial and warehousing facilities. Its 7,000 plus residents are concentrated in the Dearborn Park development (middle



*The boulevards are popular centers for community events*



income) and the Hilliard Homes (CHA). Three major institutional anchors are located in the area: Mercy Hospital, McCormick Place and the headquarters of the Chicago Daily Defender, one of the most important black newspapers, published since 1905.

### *Douglas (CA 35)*

The Douglas Community Area, at the northern end of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, is a lakefront community with diverse housing stock. Luxury highrises are located along the lakefront east of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, and lower, traditional row houses, flats and townhomes exist west of the

Drive. The neighborhood area known as the Gap is situated within the community, and is now undergoing considerable reinvestment and rehabilitation. A neighborhood plan for the area recommends improvements to the boulevards that border and define the edges of the community.

### *Oakland (CA 36)*

The Oakland Community is a small area, located at the junction of Oakwood and Drexel boulevards on the lakefront. Although it has suffered from neglect in the past, a community planning process has been initiated to plan for future development in the area. The community is also the home of the Holy

Angels Church and school, located on Oakwood Boulevard. The church, which was destroyed by fire, is to be rebuilt.

### *Grand Boulevard (CA 38)*

The Grand Boulevard Community is named after the original designation of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, which bisects the center of the community. In 1986 a pilot boulevard restoration project, guided by a boulevard neighborhood plan, was implemented along King Drive and Garfield Boulevard. The Grand Boulevard area has been undergoing considerable reinvestment in its housing, business, institutional and commercial buildings aligning the Drive.

### *Kenwood (CA 39)*

Drexel Boulevard is located in the western section of the Kenwood Community. The southern part of the community borders Hyde Park and is similar to that area: stable, attractive and well-kept. The northern section, which is in poorer condition, is part of the planning area being considered by the Kenwood-Oakland neighborhood planning committee for new and rehabilitated housing, businesses, recreational facilities and infrastructure.

### *Hyde Park (CA 41)*

Hyde Park, the south lakefront complement to Lincoln Park, is located north of the Midway and includes part of Drexel Boulevard. It has a strong community with substantial homes inland and luxury apartments and condominiums along the lakefront. Its strength is derived from its lakefront location and the University of Chicago.

### *Woodlawn (CA 42)*

To the south of the Midway Plaisance, the Woodlawn Community Area enjoys an ideal location. It is a lakefront community, neighboring the University of Chicago. Reinvestment in the area by the University and by the redevelopment of the 63rd Street Corridor offers great promise for the future. Recent investments in the community include construction of a new YMCA, rehabilitation of the elevated transit line and business area improvements along 63rd Street. Many organizations have been an active force within the community to help stabilize and reverse past deterioration.



*Highrise residential development on Dr. Martin Luther King Dr.*

### *Fuller Park (CA 37)*

The Fuller Park Community, located on a long, narrow strip along the Dan Ryan Expressway, is bordered on the south by Garfield Boulevard. Once a railroad hub, its strength is now derived from its character as a small, close-knit community with a strong housing market near the expressway.

### *Washington Park (CA 40)*

Washington Park, which is quartered by Garfield Boulevard and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, is enhanced by Washington Park in its western section. The area is part of the Third Ward pilot boulevard restoration project implemented in 1986. It continues to show signs of reinvestment and revitalization in the residential buildings along and east of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, and with the new commercial development serving public housing residents at Garfield Boulevard and the Dan Ryan Expressway.

### *New City (CA 61)*

New City, also known as the Back of the Yards, is located east of Western Boulevard and north of Garfield Boulevard. Light industry dominates the area along Western Boulevard, and residential areas characterize the section along Garfield Boulevard. The Community was the home of the Union Stock Yards, which is now being converted into light industrial uses. In 1987 a boulevard plan was prepared in conjunction with community residents and will be implemented in 1989.

### *Englewood (CA 68)*

Englewood is a community on the brink of redevelopment. Located midway and south of Garfield Boulevard, plans have been prepared for the restoration of this segment of the boulevard and for the improvement in and around the Englewood Shopping Mall, one-half mile south of the boulevard. The community is a designated Urban Renewal Conservation Area.

### *West Englewood (CA 67)*

The West Englewood Community, which is bordered on the north by Garfield Boulevard, has undergone considerable loss and disinvestment in housing, industry and commercial enterprise. However, this community is being stabilized by strong



*Commercial development along the boulevards . . . a shopping center*



*. . . a bank*

community groups actively involved in housing and industrial area improvements.

### *Gage Park (CA 63)*

Gage Park's eastern residential boundary is Western Boulevard, between 49th St. and Garfield Boulevard. Gage Park itself, a busy recreational facility, surrounds the juncture of the two boulevards. Also located at that juncture is a monument to World War II veterans, a great number of whom still live in the area. Gage Park is a low-density, family-oriented community, having a high degree of home ownership, with strong community initiative and organization.



*Vacant building in need of rehabilitation*

### *Brighton Park (CA 58)*

The Brighton Park community, situated west of Western Boulevard, is noted for its numerous churches, schools, and community organizations. Relatively strong and organized commercial districts predominate some of its sections; commercial land use also dominates the Western Avenue side of the boulevard. During summer, several large fairs are hosted along the midway of the boulevard between 43rd and 47th streets. A Southwest Rapid Transit station is being developed at its southeasternmost corner, at 49th Street and Western Boulevard.

### *McKinley Park (CA 59)*

The McKinley Park Community, located along the northern section of Western Boulevard around McKinley Park, is a closely knit area whose residents share a strong sense of pride. Commercial redevelopment is occurring within the vicinity of Archer Avenue and the boulevard, and a planned rapid transit station will be constructed along the new southwest route.

### *South Lawndale (CA 30)*

South Lawndale, popularly known as Little Village, is located along Marshall, 24th, California and 31st boulevards. Neat well-maintained homes are prevalent, and deteriorated structures within the community are few. Some of the neighborhood reinvestment occurring in the area surrounding the boulevards can be attributed to private not-for-profit organizations. Other reinvestment, such as the Marshall Square Theatre, has been exclusively due to private sector efforts. The county correctional facilities are located on the southern section of California Boulevard. A neighborhood planning committee is currently being organized to design improvements to the boulevard and prepare a plan for the community.

### *North Lawndale (CA 29)*

The North Lawndale Community encompasses all of Douglas Boulevard and Park, Independence Square and part of Independence Boulevard. The American Youth and Independence Day Fountain and Sculpture were rehabilitated in 1988. In 1986, the Urban Land Institute prepared a plan with the community that focused on the boulevards, vacant land and the Sears complex as key community features to be restored and redeveloped.

### *West Garfield Park (CA 26)*

Hamlin and Independence boulevards form the eastern boundary of the West Garfield Park community area. This predominantly residential community has experienced many urban problems of decay and abandonment. Recent public and private partnerships have produced new affordable housing that allows residents to become homeowners through sweat equity in the construction of the homes.

### *East Garfield Park (CA 27)*

The East Garfield Park Community is located on the eastern side of Garfield Park and Independence Boulevard. Most of the area, which was developed between 1900 and 1930, has suffered from deterioration. In recent years, reinvestment in the community has occurred on the southern edge of Garfield Park, and has been spurred by local housing groups and institutions.

### *Humboldt Park (CA 23)*

The Humboldt Park Community—located along sections of Humboldt, Sacramento, Franklin and Central Park boulevards, as well as Garfield and Sacramento squares—contains housing that varies from well-maintained to arson-plagued and abandoned. Most of the industrial and institutional buildings are in good condition.

### *West Town (CA 24)*

West Town is bordered by parts of Humboldt and Sacramento boulevards on the west. Many structures have been improved, and much of the quality housing remains in good condition. Considerable revitalization has occurred within the neighborhoods of Wicker Park and Ukrainian Village, and initial signs of improvement are evident along the boulevards. A local housing development corporation has developed new affordable housing in the community.

### *Logan Square (CA 22)*

The Logan Square Community is centered on Logan, Kedzie and Humboldt boulevards and Logan and Palmer squares. The boulevard system—with its 1890s mansions, graceful churches and traditional commercial areas—forms the focal point of the community. In recent years, many of the homes on and off the boulevards have been rehabilitated. Local homeowners have succeeded in gaining national historic district designation for properties facing the boulevards and have initiated volunteer tree plantings along the boulevards each spring. The CTA Logan Square rapid transit station affords excellent transportation to the Loop and to O'Hare International Airport.

### *North Center (CA 5)*

The North Center Community, which is north of Diversey Parkway and adjacent to the North Branch of the Chicago River, contains quiet residential streets with commercial strips along the major arterials and industry along the Chicago River. In recent years, the community has been influenced by the rapid growth and development of its neighbors in Lincoln Park, Lake View and Logan Square, as well as by the industrial redevelopment of the Clybourn Corridor.

### *Lake View (CA 6)*

The Lake View Community, located north of Diversey Parkway, benefits from its proximity to the lakefront and the Loop as well as from its many institutions and commercial areas. This predominantly residential community contains homes, ranging from high-density apartment and high-rise buildings along the lakefront to vintage two- and three-flat apartment buildings and single-family homes further west.

### *Lincoln Park (CA 7)*

Upscale shops, boutiques, trendy restaurants and nightclubs, and fashionable apartments and townhomes are standard in Lincoln Park, located to the south of Diversey Parkway. While the community is more closely associated with its lakefront park than with the boulevard system, the area's well-kept buildings and properties enhance their portion of the system.

## *Community Development Opportunities*

The boulevard's location and importance in the communities they cross make them pivotal in any community revitalization effort. As part of this plan, a number of residential, commercial, industrial and recreational opportunities have been identified. Their eventual implementation is subject to the availability of both public and private resources, as well as to the relative priority of each project. The areas identified are discussed below and shown on Map II-2.

### *1. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive (Cermak Road to 26th Street):*

The McCormick Hotel, McCormick Place Exhibition Centers and Donnelley Printing are vital to the area. The redevelopment

ment of the South Loop, along with the site's proximity to downtown, will continue to produce dynamic results along the Drive. The construction of a proposed third exhibition center would also generate positive economic effects.

### *2. Oakwood and Drexel Boulevards:*

Large tracts of vacant and Urban Renewal land present the opportunity to develop a community park at the juncture of two boulevards. The Oakland Community has been identified by the Chicago Park District as a community underserved by existing facilities and targeted for development of a new recreational facility.

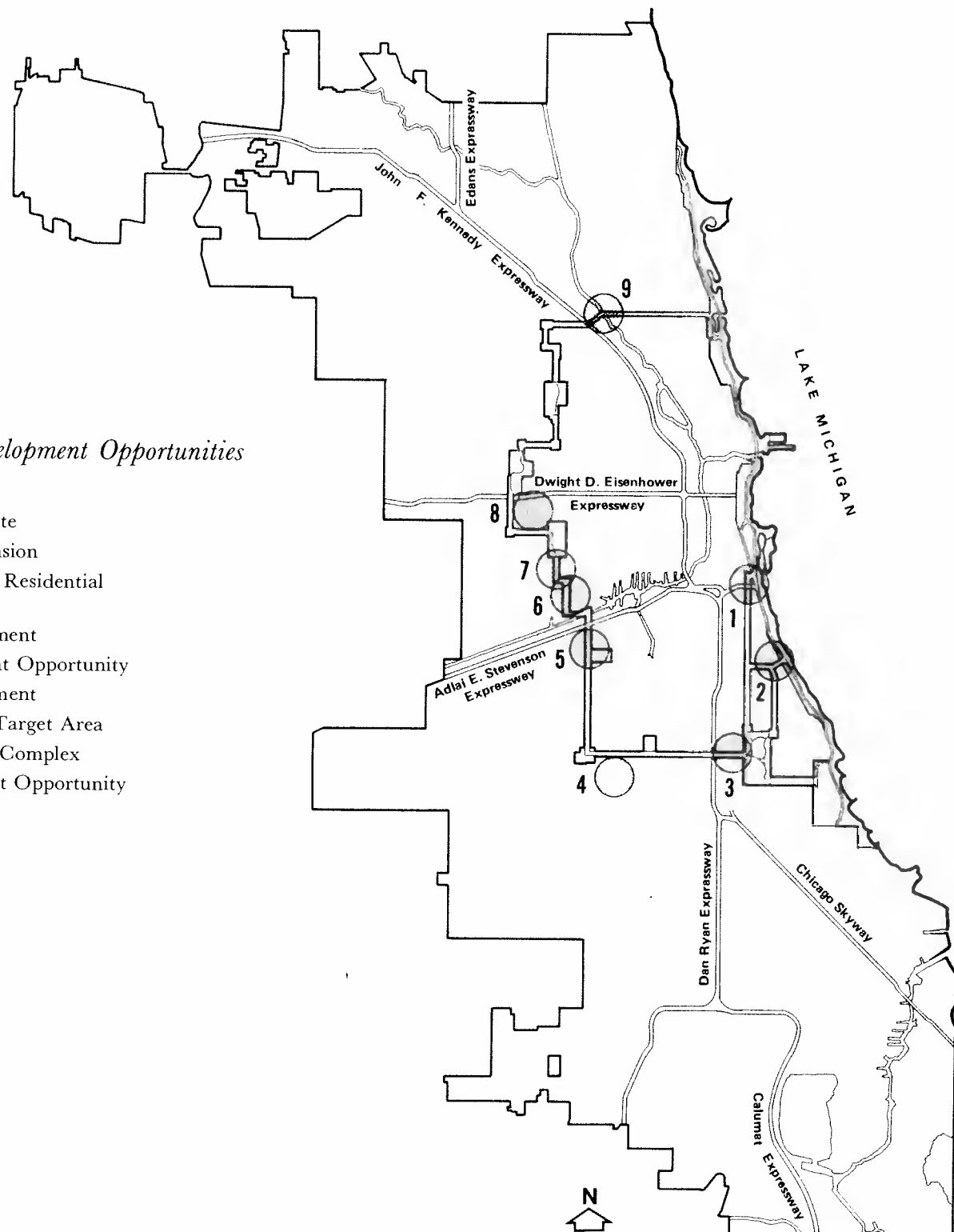


*Residential street off Logan Boulevard*



Map II-2  
Major Community Development Opportunities

1. Potential Recreational Site
2. McCormick Place Expansion
3. Mixed Use Commercial/ Residential Development
4. Industrial Park Development
5. Commercial Development Opportunity
6. Industrial Park Development
7. Housing Rehabilitation Target Area
8. Redevelopment of Sears Complex
9. Industrial Redevelopment Opportunity



### 3. Garfield Boulevard at King Drive:

Commercial improvements have been occurring along the Garfield Boulevard corridor, the latest of which is the 100,000-square-foot shopping center at the Dan Ryan Expressway. The vacant blocks south of Garfield Boulevard at Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive represent an opportunity to undertake a residential and/or commercial development that takes advantage of its proximity to a transit station as well as to Washington Park and the boulevards.

### 4. Garfield Boulevard east of Western Boulevard:

The abandoned Conrail classification yard east of Western Boulevard running from Garfield Boulevard to 71st Street contains almost 200 acres of vacant land ready for redevelopment. The area is currently zoned for manufacturing uses and adjacent parcels house a variety of industrial establishments. Once environmental and financial feasibility are established, an industrial park development could be undertaken providing an innovative model for neighborhood based industrial attraction and job creation.

### 5. Western Boulevard/49th Street and Archer/35th:

The new Southwest Transit Line will have two stations that may influence development in neighborhoods along the boulevards. One is directly on Western Boulevard at 49th Street and the other is a few blocks east of it at Archer and 35th Street. Earlier studies identified development potential for these two station areas. At the 49th Street stop, the study indicates the need for commercial development directly related to the station and sees potential for industrial development on two sites that are currently vacant. At the 35th Street stop, there is potential for both convenience and larger commercial development on adjacent sites as well as a 37,500 square foot parcel that would be an excellent housing site.

### 6. 31st and California boulevards (Lawndale Industrial Park—former International Harvester Site):

This vacant site, consisting of approximately 60 acres, is located within the industrial corridors of Western Avenue and the Sanitary and Ship Canal. Since the site's utilities have been improved to accommodate modern industry, it should be marketed as a modern industrial park with the boulevards as the landscaped entry.

*7. Marshall/California boulevards  
(21st Street to 26th Street):*

This stretch of the boulevards presents a singular opportunity to work with strong community based organizations and local homeowners on the rehabilitation of the housing stock. Neighborhood Housing Services of Little Village and of Marshall Square/Douglas straddle the boulevards and along with local businesses and institutions represent an organizational base to be tapped in the preparation and implementation of a community plan focused on the boulevards.

*8. Sears complex east of Independence Boulevard  
at Arthington Street:*

This complex of 7 buildings containing 3.8 million square feet and covering 55 acres (not counting public rights-of-way) is today only 15% occupied. The feasibility of redeveloping this property as a light industrial business park with residential development on some of the adjacent parking lots should be explored.



*Industrial section on Diversey Parkway*

*9. Diversey Parkway from Wolcott Avenue  
to Ashland Avenue:*

This primarily industrial section of Diversey Parkway crosses the northern part of the Elston/Clybourn Corridor—a still vibrant area of industrial uses stretching from Diversey south to Chicago Avenue several blocks on either side of the Chicago River.

Anchoring this strip of industrial activity is Stewart-Warner Corporation, located at 1826 W. Diversey, which employs 1300 people. Just to the east, at 1818 W. Diversey is the site of a 7.5 acre industrial park development for which construction will begin in the spring of 1989. Further east and slightly to the north along the 1900 block of Paulina stands Emerson Electric. This complex of 11 buildings on 11.5 acres is now underutilized and is considered by the City to be a prime industrial redevelopment opportunity.

*Recommendations*

- Foster the growth of existing boulevard neighborhood groups and encourage the formation of new ones where none exist.
- Promote the formation of a citizen advocacy group to represent the total system and to act as a bridge between government and private interests in the rehabilitation and revitalization of adjacent communities.
- Encourage residential, commercial, manufacturing and recreational rehabilitation and development projects that promote public/private partnerships and that simultaneously maintain existing land uses and the continuity of the greenway.
- Market existing opportunities along the boulevards to public agencies, community organizations and private investors. Enlist their assistance in making these developments come to fruition.
- Develop a promotional and informational campaign to increase awareness of the boulevards. Publications, media reports and the sponsorship of events and activities along the system should generate valuable publicity. Maps and informational brochures should be produced and distributed to serve as a tool to educate and enlighten citizens and tourists.
- Another way to promote the system is to host events along the boulevards. Tours of the system would increase the public's awareness of the boulevards' history, architecture and landscape features. The Mayor's Office of Special Events can also assist private business and community groups in programming events such as art fairs; farmers markets; parades; community and neighborhood picnics or festivals; or athletic events such as bicycle races, marathons or Special Olympics.
- Institute a boulevard recognition and awards program. As Chicagoans recognize the importance of the boulevard system, one day each year should be designated as Chicago's Boulevard Day. This designation should include an annual awards program during which groups, individuals and businesses would be recognized for distinguished activity along the system.
- Install informational signs and other identifiers based on the boulevard sign graphics system to point out historic sites or other features significant to a neighborhood.

## Chapter III      *Compatible Development and Historic Preservation*



*Beautiful and enduring architecture adds to the character of the boulevards*

The boulevard traveler whether a resident or visitor senses certain qualities as she or he tours the boulevards. Whether traversing a residential, commercial or industrial area, the first impression is that of the parklike setting conveyed by the grass, trees, benches, paths and monuments encountered along the system. The second feeling is that the face of the community is reflected in the architecture, history and human scale of the buildings that front the boulevards. In this case, the boulevards represent the Main Street of each of the different neighborhoods being traversed. Finally, one is struck by the ease with which the boulevards are traveled be it on foot, by bicycle or by car.

These facets of the boulevards' character are what create the special sense of place along them. To preserve this unique identity, special attention must be paid to new development proposed along the boulevards. Site plans and building designs should be reviewed to ensure that new development "fits in" with surrounding buildings and enhances, rather than detracts from, the boulevards. Special efforts must also be made to preserve existing buildings along the way. The principal tool for achieving this review is the zoning ordinance.

### *Zoning*

Twenty-two different zoning classifications and several planned development areas exist along the boulevard system. While approximately thirty-nine percent of the system is zoned for business, commercial, manufacturing and planned development purposes, the majority of adjacent land, or about sixty-one percent, is zoned residential (Table III-1).

### *Residential Districts*

Three General Residence Districts classified as R3, R4, or R5 occupy 16.2 miles, or 60.9%, of the system. While R3 zones are limited to small scattered sites on Diversey Parkway and Western and Garfield boulevards, R4 and R5 districts are common throughout the system.

All of the General Residence Districts permit a mixture of residential and institutional uses, including: one-, two-, and multi-family attached and detached housing; elderly housing; churches; public elementary and secondary schools; hospitals; apartment hotels; universities; and nursery schools. A variety of public utility and service structures can also be constructed in the General Residence Districts if Special Use Permits are approved.

Larger residences can be built on vacant lots next to public open space that contains at least five acres and is not less than 200 feet from the front, rear or side lot line. This open space bonus, which is authorized by the zoning ordinance, applies to most of the boulevard fronting properties. In effect, the ordinance establishes a smaller minimum lot area per dwelling unit and therefore a higher density.

### *Business and Commercial Districts*

Business or Commercial District zones are situated at major intersections where the boulevards align with major mile streets. They account for 5.6 miles, or 21.1% of the system. Most of the inappropriate commercial development along the system has occurred at major intersections where multifamily or mixed-use structures have been replaced with one-story fast-food restaurants, laundromats, gas stations and convenience food stores with parking lots accessed from the boulevards.

### *Manufacturing Districts*

Manufacturing Districts occupy 2.8 miles or 10.5% of the system. Since many of the manufacturing areas were developed early in the boulevard's history, these areas tend to be well-designed and attractive. However, signs and billboards, which can be installed on bridges in manufacturing districts, detract from the boulevard qualities discussed earlier.

### *Planned Developments*

Planned developments exist along two miles, or 7.5% of the system. Planned developments are special zoning districts that are established for individual developments by virtue of their size, scale or complexity. They permit the planning of a project and the calculation of densities over the entire development instead of a lot-by-lot basis. These projects are governed by rules established as part of the Chicago Zoning Ordinance and are subject to review by the Chicago Plan Commission.

Existing thresholds for Planned Development projects vary by zoning district but, as an example, a row house development must be processed as a Planned Development if it covers three

acres or contains 150 dwelling units. Although a development must be in substantial conformity with the underlying zoning, a Planned Development allows for more flexibility and also affords the City the opportunity to review the design of the proposed project for consistency with adjacent development. While the zoning ordinance includes a Planned Development provision for projects adjacent to waterways, no such provision currently exists for the boulevards.

### *Administration and Enforcement*

The zoning ordinance is administered and enforced by the Department of Zoning, which maintains records and issues

**Table III-1. Zoning**

Boulevard Segment	Residential	Business	Commercial	Industrial	Planned Development
Oakwood Boulevard	81 %	19 %	0 %	0 %	0 %
Drexel Boulevard	82	10	8	0	0
Midway Plaisance	6	2	0	0	92
Dr. Martin Luther King Dr.	70	18	0	8	4
Garfield Boulevard	59	31	1	9	0
Western Boulevard	18	1	38	43	0
31st Boulevard	0	0	0	100	0
California Boulevard (26th Street to 31st Boulevard)	0	0	0	71	29
Marshall Boulevard, 24th Boulevard, and California Boulevard (South to 26th Street)	69	19	0	8	4
Douglas Boulevard	98	2	0	0	0
Independence Boulevard	67	13	13	7	0
Hamlin Boulevard	84	10	0	6	0
Central Park Boulevard	90	7	0	3	0
Franklin Boulevard	67	11	0	10	12
Sacramento Boulevard	26	0	5	69	0
Humboldt Boulevard	89	9	2	0	0
Palmer Square	100	0	0	0	0
Kedzie Boulevard	79	6	15	0	0
Logan Boulevard	92	8	0	0	0
Diversey Parkway	51	16	15	17	0

\* Zoning classification figures are based on linear measurements from City of Chicago Zoning

Maps without deductions for public rights-of-way.

The industrial category is based on manufacturing classifications.

Planned developments are business, institutional and residential structures, which vary in composition.



*Varying building heights and setbacks*



*Lack of landscaping, signage are problems along the boulevards*



permits. Decisions regarding appeals, requests for variances and special use permits are determined by the Zoning Board of Appeals.

The Department of Planning can initiate, direct and review recommendations on proposed changes to the ordinance, and can advise the Zoning Administrator and the Zoning Board of Appeals on zoning matters. As part of a proposed review and revision of the zoning ordinance, the Department of Planning will be recommending changes that correct highlighted problems along the boulevard system.

### *Critical Zoning Issues*

As discussed at the beginning of this chapter, the boulevards are a parklike corridor in an urban setting. They are also the main street of the many communities that they cross and have a human scale to them. Finally, they are a traffic corridor that accommodates the pedestrian, cyclist and automobile alike.

The challenge in using the boulevards as catalysts for neighborhood revitalization will be to accommodate new development along the boulevards while maintaining their highly cherished character. New development along the boulevards should be designed to strengthen this character. Specific characteristics which will greatly influence whether new development enhances or detracts from the boulevards are as follows:

**Building Height.** The higher density afforded by the open space bonus can produce new development that is out of character with adjacent structures not so much from a density point of view but by disrupting the existing roof line pattern.

**Setbacks.** Original structures built on the system were subject to a uniform setback, thus producing consistent building lines across the system. New developments, however, are subject to a new zoning ordinance that encourages fluctuations in the building setbacks. The effect on the boulevards is that existing building lines are being broken, thus producing a jagged effect.

**Building Orientation.** The zoning ordinance also permits new corner lot development to front side streets rather than the boulevards. This disrupts the established pattern of buildings facing the boulevards.

**Parking Lots.** In the case of three planned developments, parking lots located in the boulevard rights-of-way detract from

the boulevards as open space to be used by the pedestrian. The really significant problem, however, is parking lots located on the boulevard side of a new development that interrupt the existing streetwall pattern, if one exists.

**Curb Cuts.** New developments, especially commercial ones, locate their driveways on the boulevards to take advantage of spur-of-the-moment purchasers along these high traffic corridors. Such curb cuts seriously detract from the pedestrian character of the boulevards.

**Landscaping.** In recent years, numerous fast food franchises, housing developments and parking lots have been built on the boulevards. Frequently, these developments do not include much landscaping, and their collective effect on the boulevards is to diminish their greenway character.

### *Architecture*

Development along Chicago's boulevard system is characterized by a rich diversity of architectural types and styles. Residential types range from mansionlike single-family dwellings to multifamily high-rise structures and mixed-use structures with commercial uses on the ground floor and residences above.

#### *Highrises*

Most of the newer highrises built of glass, steel and concrete without ornamentation reflect the "International Style" of architecture, exemplified by the Prairie Shores complex along Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. Some of the early steel and brick skyscrapers, such as the Brewster Apartments on Diversey at Pine Grove Avenue, date back to the late 1890s and 1900s and reflect an earlier evolution of the Chicago School of Architecture. This style is characterized by strongly articulated structural elements with prominent bays and windows.

#### *Residences*

Multiple row houses, two- to six-flat buildings, and multiple-dwelling apartment and courtyard buildings are the dominant structures along the system. Among these are some of the city's best designed and built residential units. Most are constructed of masonry or stone, with highly decorative and varied facades and entrances a half-story above grade. Decorative detailing such as cornices and pediments; textural variations;



and towers, gables, and turrets distinguish one building from another.

Single-family dwellings along the boulevards exhibit a range of styles found in the Midwest from the 1870s to the present, including the revival styles, American Renaissance, and Chicago's own Prairie Style.

### *Institutional Structures*

The more dramatic and architecturally flamboyant structures are institutional structures with Gothic, Roman, Greek, Byzantine and Spanish styling. Most of the churches along the system were constructed along traditional lines with brick and stone, steeples, steep gable roofs and traditional symmetrical windows. Some of these places of worship, which are now Christian, were originally built as synagogues and temples.

### *Industrial Buildings*

Industrial buildings constructed during the heyday of the system reflect the prestige of their location and a degree of architectural detailing and style. Classic Chicago red brick loft industrial buildings with an entrance tower, accented terracotta trim details and large windows line sections of Western Boulevard. Newer industrial buildings with soft-edged curved brick corners, simple yet classic detailed entrances, and decoratively enclosed water towers surround Sacramento Square.

### *Historic Districts*

Three historic districts and numerous historical structures exist along the boulevard system. When an area is designated as a historic district, construction restrictions and tax benefits enhance and stabilize restoration efforts. City of Chicago tax benefits currently include freezing real estate taxes over an eight-year period; Federal tax benefits are still being refined.

The following historic districts and structures along the system are included in the National Register of Historic Places:

#### *Districts*

- **Black Metropolis Historic District.** This district comprises five buildings and one public monument which collectively make up one of the most significant landmarks of black urban history in the U.S. General boundaries are 35th Street

to Pershing Rd. and State Street to King Drive.

- **Hyde Park-Kenwood Historic District**—bounded roughly by 47th and 59th streets and Cottage Grove and Lake Park avenues (boundary extensions include 825-833 and 837-49 East 52nd St.).
- **Jackson Park Historic Landscape District and Midway Plaisance** (the site of the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition), including Jackson and Washington parks and the Midway Plaisance roadway.
- **Logan Square Historic District**—including Logan, Kedzie, and Humboldt boulevards as well as Logan and Palmer squares. This area was designated through the efforts and

research of homeowners' associations to call attention to the numerous homes rehabilitated along this section of the boulevard.

### *Individual Structures*

- **Ida B. Wells-Barnett House**, 3624 S. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive.
- **Oscar Stanton De Priest House**, 4536-4538 S. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive.
- **Schultze Baking Company Plant**, 40 E. Garfield Boulevard.
- **Jewish People's Institute**, 3500 W. Douglas Boulevard.



*Manufacturing districts tend to be well designed*



Victorian graystones fronting the boulevards

In addition to these historic districts, two individual structures and one district have been designated as Chicago Landmarks. They are the Brewster Apartments at 2800 N. Pine Grove; the Melissia Ann Elam House, 4726 S. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive; and the Kenwood District, an area bounded roughly by 47th Street, Blackstone Avenue, 51st Street and Drexel Boulevard.

The Chicago Historic Resources Survey is a comprehensive survey of the city that was initiated in 1983 by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks to identify historically and architecturally noteworthy buildings and areas throughout Chicago. Survey staff assess every structure in the city in terms of age, degree of integrity and level of possible significance.

As part of the Chicago Historic Resources Survey, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks has already surveyed the majority of the boulevard system. Their findings of architectural/historically significant structures and structures that contribute to the historic character of the area are illustrated on the boulevard segment maps (see appendix). The abundance of significant structures identified by Landmarks staff further attests to the historic legacy that exists along Chicago's boulevards.

## Recommendations

The various zoning and architectural problems described above point to the need for zoning and urban design policies that address in a sensitive way the need to preserve the character of the boulevard system and incorporate the changing needs of the communities surrounding them. Community input and participation must be built into any review process to ensure community input and some measure of control over the various mechanisms that can be used to preserve the character of the boulevards while promoting the revitalization of the surrounding neighborhoods.

## Zoning

- The Planned Development section of the zoning ordinance should be modified to include a special boulevard provision with a lower threshold for projects subject to a planned development review to ensure design review of more proposed developments along the boulevards.
- The zoning ordinance should be revised to require that all

projects taking advantage of the open space bonus along the boulevards be subject to reviews as a planned development to ensure compatibility with adjacent development.

- Establish frontyard setbacks for properties adjacent to the boulevards to maintain established setbacks and building lines/heights.
- Require new corner residences to front the boulevard rather than the side streets.
- Ban new parking development on the boulevard medians or in areas directly adjacent to the medians. Encourage owners to relocate parking areas and maintenance sheds away from boulevard medians. Ask that they screen adjacent parking areas on those that cannot be immediately relocated (see Figure III-1).

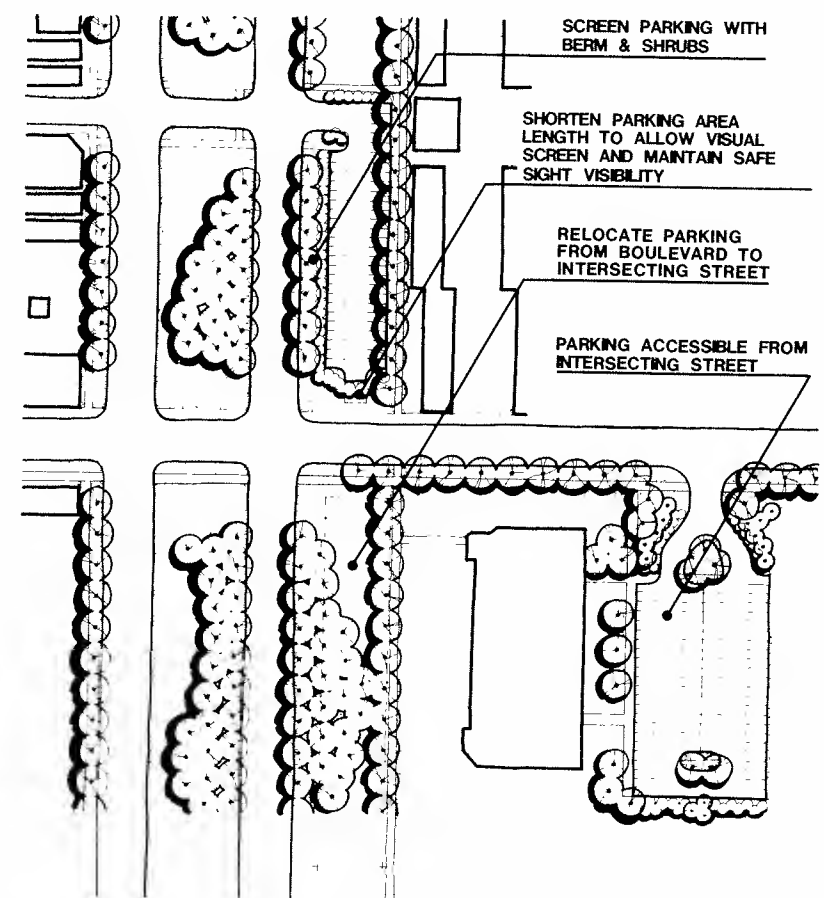


Figure III-1. Parking recommendations

- Minimize curb cuts related to new development along the boulevards as a means of maintaining their pedestrian character.
- Require all new development along the boulevards to include landscaping treatment that contributes to and enhances the boulevard.

### *Architecture*

- Encourage residents to take advantage of public incentives to preserve and rehabilitate architecturally/historically significant structures where appropriate.
- Maintain the original design integrity of the buildings fronting on the boulevard by encouraging preservation and sensitive renovation of the facades visible from the public rights-of-way.
- Develop design guidelines for the exteriors of new buildings visible from the public rights-of-way of the boulevard system.
- Encourage private development of appropriate infill housing to reduce the number of vacant lots while maintaining the character of the boulevards. The possibility of physically moving homes in danger of being demolished onto vacant lots along the system should also be investigated.
- Protect the “frame” of traditional apartment buildings at many of the major intersections along the system and encourage their restoration.
- Encourage public education on the historical and architectural significance of buildings along the boulevards.
- Encourage local not-for-profits to conduct tours focusing on the boulevards’ architecture, monuments and historic districts.

### *Historic Preservation*

- Preserve historic buildings where practical.
- Explore the benefits of local designation and/or listing on the National Register for Historic Places for the entire system or portions thereof.



*Black Metropolis, Unity Hall*



## Chapter IV     *A Stronger Recreational Linkage*



*The boulevards host a variety of recreational activities*

The boulevard system provides a sense of spaciousness and greenery that adds beauty to adjacent neighborhoods. Recreation, leisure time, festivals and the linkage of all these elements bring a sense of neighborhood excitement, security and fulfillment to the surrounding communities and to the city as a whole.

Since the boulevards act as a link between areas of recreational activities, major rehabilitation efforts should focus on the green medians, which offer recreational and leisure-time benefits to surrounding neighborhoods. Five major recreation areas exist along the system.

First, the boulevards function as a recreational link connecting seven major inland parks. As originally conceived, they were used for such activities as pleasure driving, walking, bicycling and horseback riding rather than sports activities, playgrounds or intensive recreation.

Today, more and more active recreational uses are being accommodated on the medians and roadways themselves. The boulevard system now hosts a variety of recreational uses from passive to active sports, a multitude of leisure time uses and citywide and local events.

Second, six squares have been identified as having recreational importance. They are: Logan, Palmer, Sacramento, Garfield, Independence and Drexel squares. While all of these areas function as local recreational centers, some function more like plazas and can accommodate special events and festivals.

Third, seven inland parks are situated along the boulevard system. All of these major recreational areas provide a wide range of activities and uses and are maintained and programmed by the Chicago Park District.

At two points along the boulevard system (Diversey/Logan and the North Branch of the Chicago River, Western/31st boulevards and the Sanitary and Ship Canal), potential exists to link the water course with the boulevard system. The expanded recreational use of the waterways can be coordinated with the boulevard uses.

And fifth, the system connects with the lakefront at four points: Diversey Parkway, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Oakwood Boulevard and the Midway Plaisance. These four points provide direct access to the lakefront parks, Lake Michigan and Lake Shore Drive from the inland neighborhoods.

## *Recreation Along the Boulevards*

### *Recreational Uses*

**Organized Play.** Organized play activities sponsored by adjacent grade schools, clubs or other institutions are a relatively new use of the boulevards. Lightly traveled sections of the boulevard or service drives are barricaded for recess and after-school outdoor recreation. Some schools hold recess on the green medians.

Children or the elderly participate in most organized play activities, and neither group has been detrimental to the medians. However, the use of play materials by children such as

old tires, milk crates and cardboard is considered unsightly by many surrounding residents. Streetway closings can also cause some inconvenience.

**Exercise Activities.** In recent years, exercise activities have increased along the boulevards. Since these groups are small and tend to be scattered in different locations, they do very little damage to the medians.

Jogging, a relatively new but popular sport, tends to create three or four small, depressed parallel ruts in areas without graveled pathways. Multiple ruts occur when the principal trail becomes water-logged from lack of drainage or when trails are improperly surfaced.



*Active sports are played on the Midway Plaisance*



*Community fairs and festivals on the boulevards and squares*

**Sports and Active Play Use.** Soccer, baseball, football and field hockey, played on the boulevard medians, destroy and damage turf areas. By their nature, these sports are played on the large grassy areas which are also important visually.

The most damaging of all of the active sport activities is "mud football," which is played during the late fall at the western end of Logan Boulevard, along Garfield Boulevard and at several other isolated areas along the system. The "best" playing fields are depressed, worn areas of the medians where mud is most accessible. Several groups of teenagers and adults play football on these areas in wet weather, and many drive along the system looking for suitable sites.

Mud football was so prevalent several years ago in Palmer Square that the community responded by installing wood bollards to block and protect the open fields. The experiment stifled the destruction on Palmer Square, but it led to the destruction of other medians along the boulevards, which were selected as "alternative" play sites.

**Free Play and Leisure Uses.** Free play activities and leisure uses along the boulevard system have not significantly affected the medians, primarily because the soft-surface activities tend to change location from day to day. However, dog owners who do not pick up after their pets create a considerable mess on the medians, which is especially noticeable after the first spring thaw.

**Events and Festivals.** Public events and festivals have not significantly damaged the medians and roadways. Most of these activities are enjoyed and are welcomed by neighborhood residents as long as litter problems are addressed and local uses of the boulevards are only temporarily disrupted.

Carnival activities have been the least desired activity for neighbors and the boulevard medians, since most carnivals run for several days and operate into the late hours of the night. Besides causing considerable damage to the medians, carnivals create a nuisance for surrounding residents.

**Riding and Walking.** The boulevard system was originally designed as a pleasure drive that linked inland parks. Today, pleasure driving and sightseeing whether in an auto or on a bicycle is rather difficult because of heavy traffic volume on certain segments and speed limits that are maintained or exceeded.

### *Recreational Mix*

The boulevards have many recreational uses, but the current mix of these activities is often far from ideal. While heavy sports usage tends to discourage or preclude other uses from the area, close-to-home play lots are compatible with most other uses (unless a safety hazard is created when the center median is isolated by speeding and high-volume rush-hour traffic).

If permanent play equipment is installed, other uses of the area will be limited. To compound the problem, play equipment deteriorates very quickly because a bureau or agency responsible for its maintenance has not been designated.

### *Recreational Management*

Today, the Department of Streets and Sanitation Bureau of Street Operations and Beautification is in charge of managing the uses along the system. However, its obligations are limited only to the issuance of permits for events, festivals and special functions along the system's public rights-of-way. The Bureau does not program, monitor or regulate recreational uses on the system. Unless an activity is illegal or is causing a disruption and a complaint is received by the Chicago Police Department, activities are neither checked nor discouraged.

The programming of special events is handled by the Mayor's Office of Special Events, which has sponsored parades, art fairs, tours, street theaters, marathons, bicycle races, farmers markets and community parties.

Only the 80-acre Midway Plaisance, a part of Sacramento Boulevard and Hamlin Boulevard (or approximately one and one-half miles of the system), are maintained and regulated by the Chicago Park District. Park District rules and regulations are enforced within these boulevard segments, and district programs are conducted within the medians. The most important recreational segment is the Midway Plaisance, where the Park District maintains active play fields in the spring, summer and fall, as well as ice skating during the winter months.

As already outlined, Chicago's boulevards represent a valuable recreational resource for city residents. When they were managed and operated by the Chicago Park District, the boulevards were in better condition than they are today because the Park District is better prepared to maintain areas for recreational uses than is the City of Chicago. Furthermore, the boulevards are part of the network that links the regional

parks to the neighborhoods and, as such, are an integral part of the park system. For those reasons, the City of Chicago and the Chicago Park District should jointly explore the feasibility of transferring the boulevards back to the Park District.

## *The Major Inland Parks*

The lakefront of Chicago is a unique open space and recreational asset with 22 miles of continuous park lands adjoining Lake Michigan. Recreational facilities, programs, leisure time uses and cultural activities draw millions of people each year.

Chicago's 28-mile boulevard system links seven major inland parks with the lakefront parks (see Map IV-1). Of the total 7,308 acres of Chicago Park District lands, fifty-four percent is connected by the boulevard system—2,816 continuous acres along Lake Michigan and 1,091 acres contained within the seven inland parks described below.

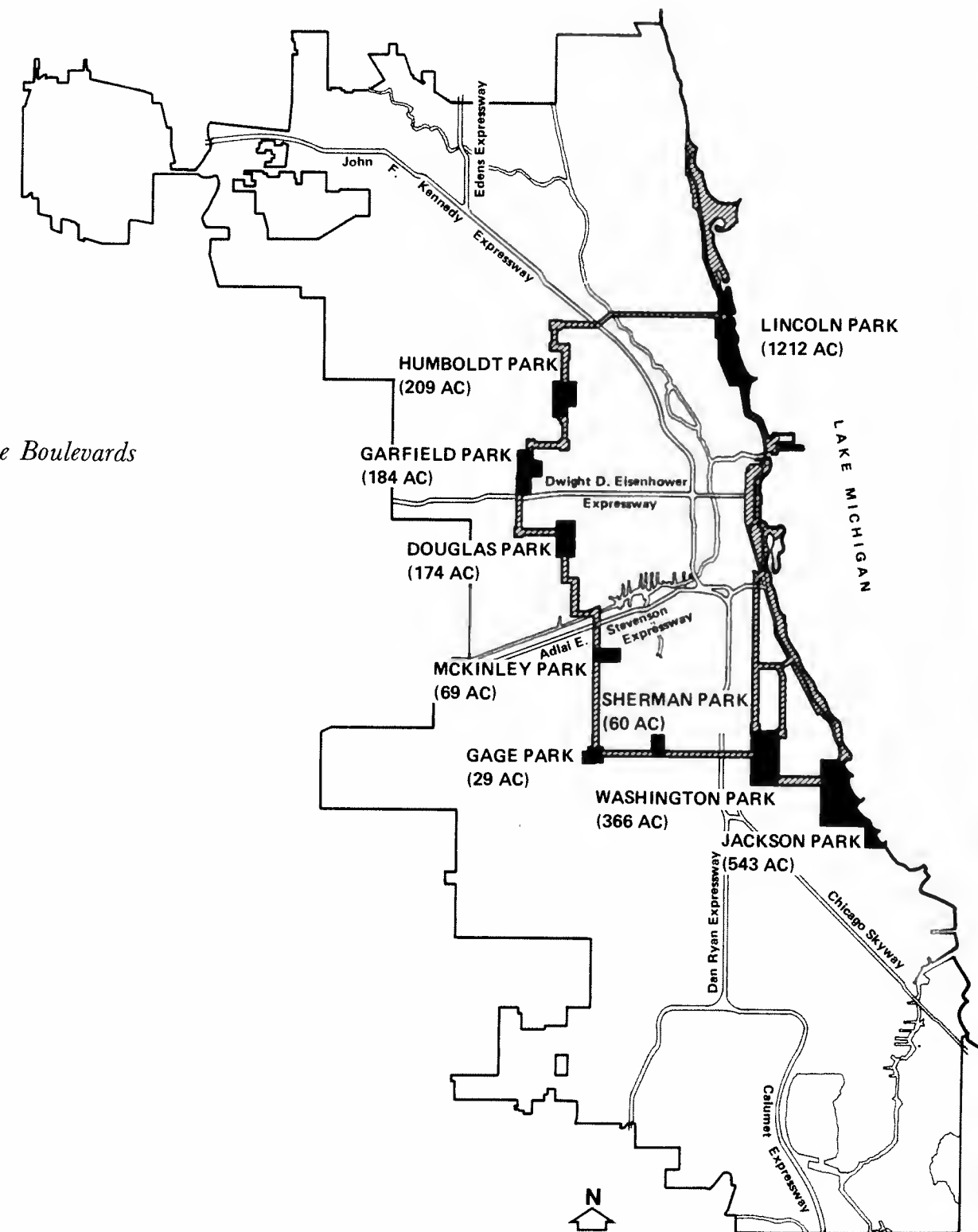
The Chicago Park District in conjunction with the Commission on Chicago Landmarks is conducting a study of some of the parks in the system titled "A Model Preservation Plan for Chicago's Parks." This project is intended to survey, investigate landmark potential, analyze original design intent and assess current conditions of five inland parks around the city. The plan is intended to produce recommendations for the preservation and maintenance of these parks, three of which are along the boulevards: Washington, Sherman and Humboldt parks. The study represents the first step in a long range planning process undertaken by the Park District to assess and improve parks across the city.

### *Washington Park*

Washington Park, located adjacent to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive and at the end of Garfield and Drexel boulevards and the Midway Plaisance, is the largest of the inland parks at 366 acres. The park, which offers a variety of activities and hosts citywide and regional activities, is arranged in two sections: the north with its broad, open athletic fields and the south with its lagoon and lawn areas. The George F. Bynum Adventure Playland, an innovative and popular children's play attraction, is located on an island in the lagoon.

Long, winding pathways border swimming pool, garden, tennis court and play areas occupying the perimeter of the park. The Dyett public school is located on the northern section of the

*Map IV-1  
Major Parks Along the Boulevards*





park, and the DuSable Museum of African-American History is situated on the eastern edge of the park.

### *Sherman Park*

Located on the north side of Garfield Boulevard, Sherman Park is a product of Frederick Law Olmsted's firm and an ideal example of the evolution of parks from passive to active recreational uses. The southern three-quarters of the 60-acre park is still a pastoral landscape with a lagoon and large island as its focus. However, the northern quarter is now occupied by a fieldhouse, swimming pool, track, courts and play areas.

A symmetrical inner roadway and path formally loop the park. Four pedestrian bridges cross the lagoon and feed onto the island.

### *Gage Park*

This small 29-acre park, located at the intersection of Western and Garfield boulevards, is divided into four quadrants by the boulevards. The western half is heavily occupied by play fields, courts and track areas. The fieldhouse, located in the southwest quadrant, contains a swimming pool and provides space for year-round indoor recreation. The eastern half of the park is less developed, and lawns provide passive and active recreational areas.



*Park entrance designed by Jens Jensen at Marshall Boulevard and Douglas Park*

### *McKinley Park*

McKinley Park, which was developed at the turn of the century, is adjacent to Western Boulevard. This small 69-acre park was designed to accommodate active recreational uses that are grouped and defined within broad graceful walks.

The McKinley Park fieldhouse is located in the western section of the park, with a swimming pool, athletic fields and tennis courts adjacent to it. The center of the park contains a lawn area used for picnicking, with children's play equipment to the side. The eastern area is dominated by the lagoon, additional playing fields and court areas.

### *Douglas Park*

Douglas Park contains 174 acres and links Douglas and Marshall boulevards via Sacramento Drive, the looping interior park drive.

Ogden Avenue divides the park into two sections. The northern part contains a lagoon, which has, in part, been converted into a swimming lagoon and beach area. The original boathouse is currently being used as a fieldhouse and hosts a variety of indoor programs for surrounding residents. Collins High School is located in a large area of the northern section. A huge open field for active recreation, enhanced by flower gardens and a water court, occupies the southern section. Track and field areas, a spray pool and a children's playground are located on the outer perimeter of the park.

### *Garfield Park*

Garfield Park connects Central Park and Independence boulevards via Hamlin Boulevard by any one of several park roadways that divide the 184-acre park into three distinct sections. The northern section contains the Garfield Park Conservatory, park maintenance facilities, tennis courts and a spray pool. The park's lagoon and Gold Dome Administration Building, which has been expanded into a fieldhouse with indoor recreational use, are located in the wider midsection. The southern section of the park, which contains three play and baseball fields, is accented by an ornate and popular bandstand and dance court. Leif Erickson public school is located on the far south end of the park. Play slabs, spray pools and children's playgrounds are scattered about the perimeter of the park.



The park is heavily used by the surrounding residents, and its conservatory is a citywide facility. It is served by the Lake Street rapid transit line.

### *Humboldt Park*

This 209-acre park is bisected by Humboldt Drive (the direct connection of Humboldt and Sacramento boulevards). Most of the recreational activity areas are concentrated along Humboldt Drive and surround the park's water features. An extensive series of pedestrian pathways connect heavily used picnicking and outdoor activity areas. Its famous garden has been refurbished and again draws considerable crowds.

The western half of the lagoon has been converted into a swimming area which is popular during the summer. Bath houses and year-round indoor recreational activities and programs are located in the fieldhouse next to the lagoon.

A large spray pool along the eastern lagoon is popular with local children, and a swimming pool is located adjacent to Sacramento Boulevard. Four major play field areas are scattered along the park's interior as are several court areas and baseball fields. An architecturally stunning boathouse, which is now closed, once doubled as a concert and concession stand.

### *Recommendations*

- The City of Chicago and the Chicago Park District should explore the feasibility of transferring management of the boulevards back to the Park District.
- Discourage intense sports activities, such as soccer, baseball, football (especially mud football) and field hockey on the grass medians.
- Encourage the development of new parks and playlots adjacent to the boulevards for active recreational use.
- Initiate a systemwide repair and improvement program for existing pedestrian walks and sidewalks. This includes the installation of new walks as needed.
- Develop a systemwide continuous trail network for walking, biking and jogging. The system should be integrated with the trail system within the existing inland parks, rapid transit stations and bus waiting areas. The trail network should

provide seating areas, drinking fountains and other support facilities.

- Develop an interpretive walk along the trail to highlight features and educate the public about the trees, flowers, design, monuments and architecture it passes. The walk could be used for both guided or self guided tours.
- Develop a linkage between the boulevard trail system and the two waterways it crosses. Views of the waterways should be a factor in future improvements to boulevard bridges.
- Create pedestrian environments in areas near other activities, and create visually attractive settings with comfortable seating away from noise and high winds, and with enough sun or shade to ensure their use.
- Use plantings to redirect pedestrian traffic or to discourage inappropriate activities within an area.

## Chapter V     *A Systemwide Image of the Boulevards*



*American Youth and Independence Day monument at Douglas and Independence boulevards*

The structure of the boulevards and the current condition of its key features (trees, turf, parks, monuments and bridges) reflect both the innovative design of the original boulevard system and the fact that the system has aged and requires restoration.

Chicago's boulevard system developed originally as a single linear circulation system independent of the overall grid pattern of the city's streets. Originally designed as pleasure drives, they quickly acquired another role as Chicago's first limited access thoroughfares.

From the beginning, designers of the boulevards creatively balanced recreational and pedestrian needs against transportation requirements. Different modes of transportation were physically separated, and access to and from the system was restricted. In 1871, pathways along the medians separated horseback riders, bicyclists and pedestrians from carriage traffic. Longer-distance travel moved steadily along the center "express" lanes while local traffic used side lanes. At points where the boulevards turned, squares, monuments and parks were constructed as focal points or accents. To further emphasize the beauty of the system, delivery vehicles were banned from the boulevards.

In the 1890s, an odd assortment of horseless carriages and street cars began to lumber down the boulevard system. Entries and exits on the system were restricted to minimize traffic flow interruptions. In its heyday, boulevard traffic always had the right-of-way and the speed limit was set at eight miles per hour to ensure a leisurely drive.

By 1917, however, the policy of maintaining the boulevards as pleasure drives was abandoned, and they became major

thoroughfares. Streetcars and other slow-moving vehicles were banned from boulevards and speed limits were set higher than on other city streets. As a result, the boulevards began carrying substantially more automobile traffic than parallel city streets.

As the city grew, the boulevards were absorbed into the overall grid pattern of Chicago's streets. Chicago's grid pattern is based on mile streets, operating as major arterials, and half-mile streets, functioning as collector streets. Today, sixteen miles of the twenty-eight-mile boulevard system are aligned with the mile and half-mile grid and have become a critical part of Chicago's circulation system.

As boulevards were incorporated into the grid pattern, the continuous circulation of the system became secondary to the overall grid design. Additional intersections, signage and channeling and roadway widening were all developed to deal with growing traffic requirements. As a result, medians and parkways have been narrowed and the number of trees near curbs have been reduced.

## Circulation System

### Patterns

As illustrated on Figure V-1, Map V-1 and Table V-1, six boulevard patterns exist along the system:

- divided drives with center median and parallel service roads,
- center drive with parallel service roads (separated by median strips),
- divided drives with center median,
- boulevard paired with an arterial street,
- center drive with broad parkways, and
- simple roadway.

Table V-1 lists out each boulevard segment and indicates its pattern and length.

The divided drives with a center median and parallel service roads can be found only on the Midway Plaisance, which runs from Jackson Park to Washington Park. The most salient characteristic of this pattern is that it has a wide sunken center median formed initially to serve as a canal that instead is used as a football field and skating area. This pattern is also

**Table V-1. Boulevard Patterns**

Segment	Length (miles)	Type
Oakwood Boulevard	0.75	Simple Roadway
Drexel Boulevard	1.60	Divided Drives with Center Median
Washington Park	1.00	Divided Drives with Center Median and Parallel Service Roads
Midway Plaisance	1.00	
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive (Part 1)	1.50	Divided Drives with Center Median
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive (Part 2)	3.00	Center Drive with Service Roads
Garfield Boulevard	3.50	Divided Drives with Center Median
Western Boulevard	3.10	Boulevard Paired with Arterial Street
31st Boulevard	0.50	Boulevard Paired with Arterial Street
California Boulevard	0.75	Boulevard Paired with Arterial Street
24th Boulevard	0.25	Center Drive with Broad Parkway
Marshall Boulevard	0.50	Center Drive with Broad Parkway
Douglas Park	0.65	Divided Drives with Center Median
Douglas Boulevard	0.75	
Independence Boulevard	0.90	Divided Drives with Center Median
Hamlin Boulevard	0.30	Divided Drives with Center Median
Garfield Park	0.75	Center Drive and Service Roads
N. Central Park Boulevard	0.10	
Franklin Boulevard	0.75	Center Drive with Service Roads
Sacramento Boulevard	0.55	Center Drive with Service Roads
Humboldt Park	0.75	Center Drive and Service Roads
Humboldt Boulevard	0.75	
Palmer Square	0.25	Rotary
Kedzie Boulevard	1.00	Center Drive and Service Roads
Logan Boulevard (Part 1)		
Logan Boulevard (Part 2)	0.35	Simple Roadway
Diversey Parkway	2.50	Simple Roadway
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>28.30</b>	

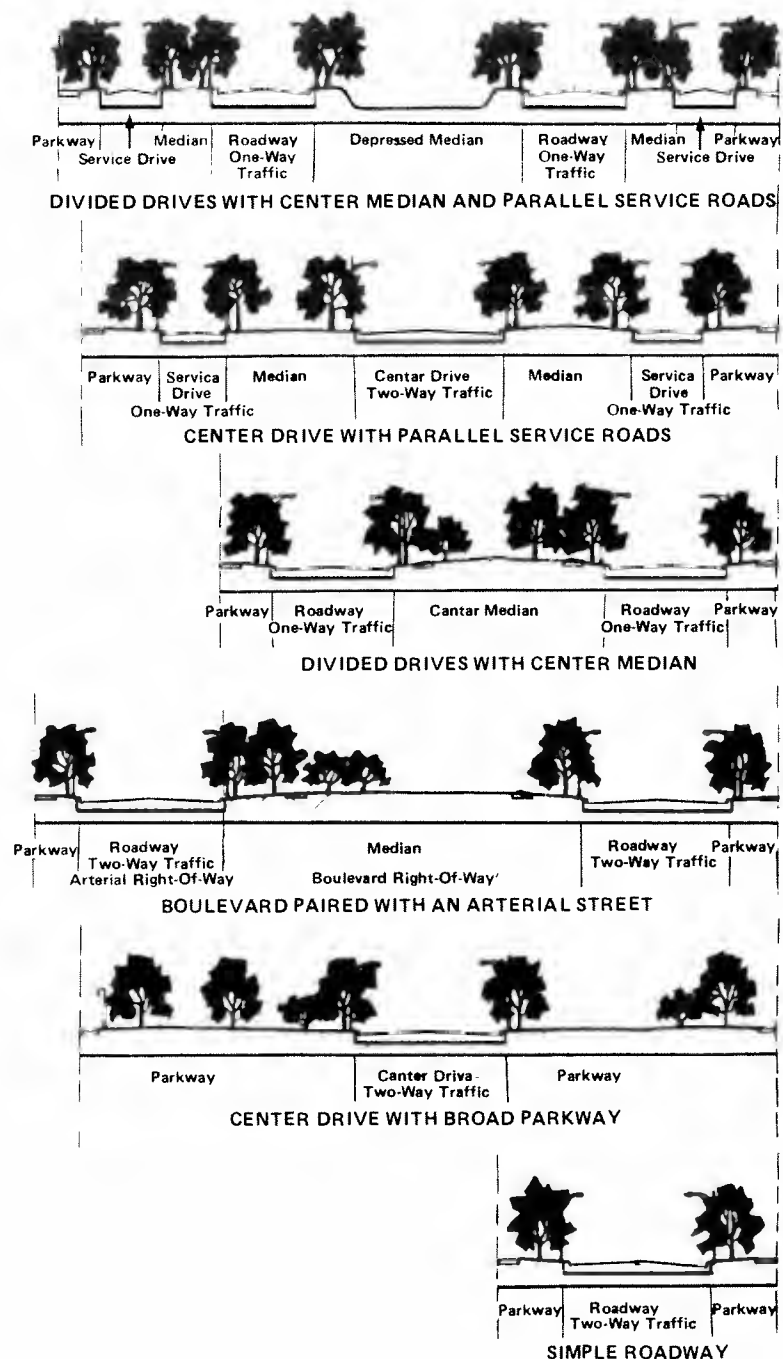
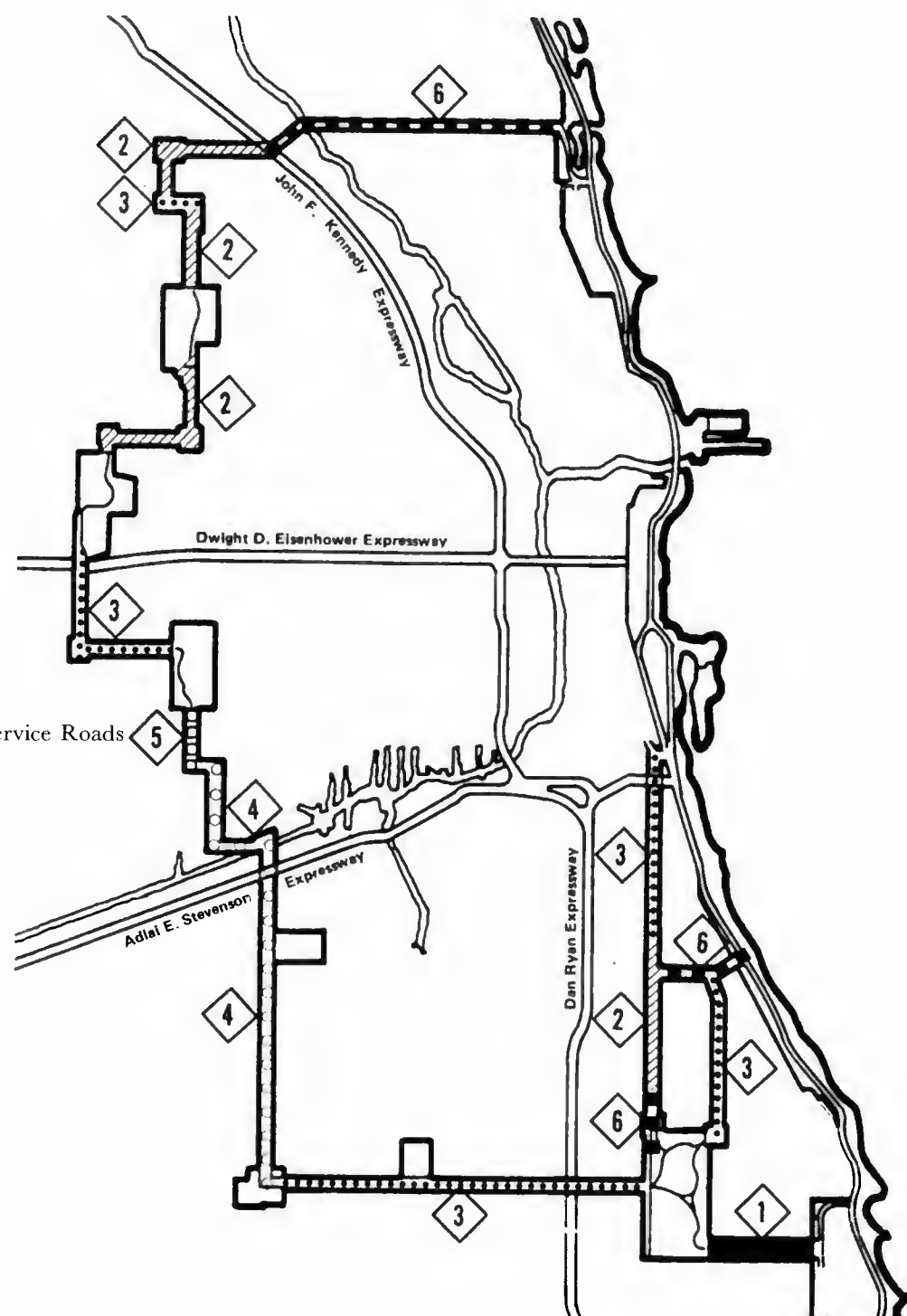


Figure V-1: Rendering of the six boulevard patterns

Map V-1  
Location of the Boulevard  
Patterns Along the System



1. Divided Drives with Center Median and Service Roads
2. Center Drive with Service Roads
3. Divided Drives with Center Median
4. Boulevard Paired with an Arterial Street
5. Center Drive with Broad Parkway
6. Simple Roadway

characterized by a spacious 700 ft. right-of-way.

The two-way center drive with parallel one-way service roads separated by median strips (such as King Drive south of 35th Street) is the second most common pattern in the system. Medians create a buffer between the center drive developed for faster-moving, longer distance, direct travel and the service drives adjacent to homes which are used for slower local traffic. Rights-of-way vary from 200 to 310 feet in width.

The divided double drives with a center median pattern (such as Garfield Boulevard) is the most common pattern along the system. A wide center tree-lined median divides two one-way drives with rights-of-way that vary from 200 to 250 feet in width.

The boulevard paired with a major arterial pattern is prevalent in nonresidential areas of the system along California, 31st, and Western boulevards. Arterial streets are divided from the boulevard by a wide median, and both the boulevard drive and the arterial carry two-way traffic. This pattern developed as a response to industrial traffic needs and as an attempt to keep trucks off the boulevards. Rights of way vary from 200 to 250 feet.

The center drive with broad parkways pattern was developed only along Marshall and 24th boulevards. These boulevards carry both local and long-distance traffic along the center drive. Both boulevards have a 250-foot-wide right-of-way which gives the homes an appearance of expansive front yards.

The simple roadway pattern (on Oakwood Boulevard, Diversey Parkway, and parts of Logan Boulevard and King Drive) consists of a two-way center roadway with parkways of normal width on each side.

### Roadway Conditions

Except for several short segments along the boulevards, most of the roadway surfaces of the system's major drives are in good condition. The exceptions occur at bridge viaducts (often as a result of poor drainage), some intersections and roadways passing through parks. In some sections, settling catch basins and deteriorated curbs and gutters along park roadways are apparent.

Parallel service roads along 6.65 miles of the system are all in poor condition. These roadways are in need of resurfacing, drainage improvements and curb repairs.

## Traffic

From a traffic standpoint, the boulevards have adjusted well over the years to increased capacities and speeds. Motorists follow the roadway patterns identified in the preceding section except at turning points in the system, where the continuity of the boulevards is broken. Six squares, constructed at these turning points, are affected by direct, rotary, or channelized connections.

The overall continuity is also broken at "transition areas" or points along the system where travelers may become disoriented. Eleven such transition areas exist and lack clear visual continuity with the rest of the system and clear traffic patterns.

### Squares and Traffic Patterns

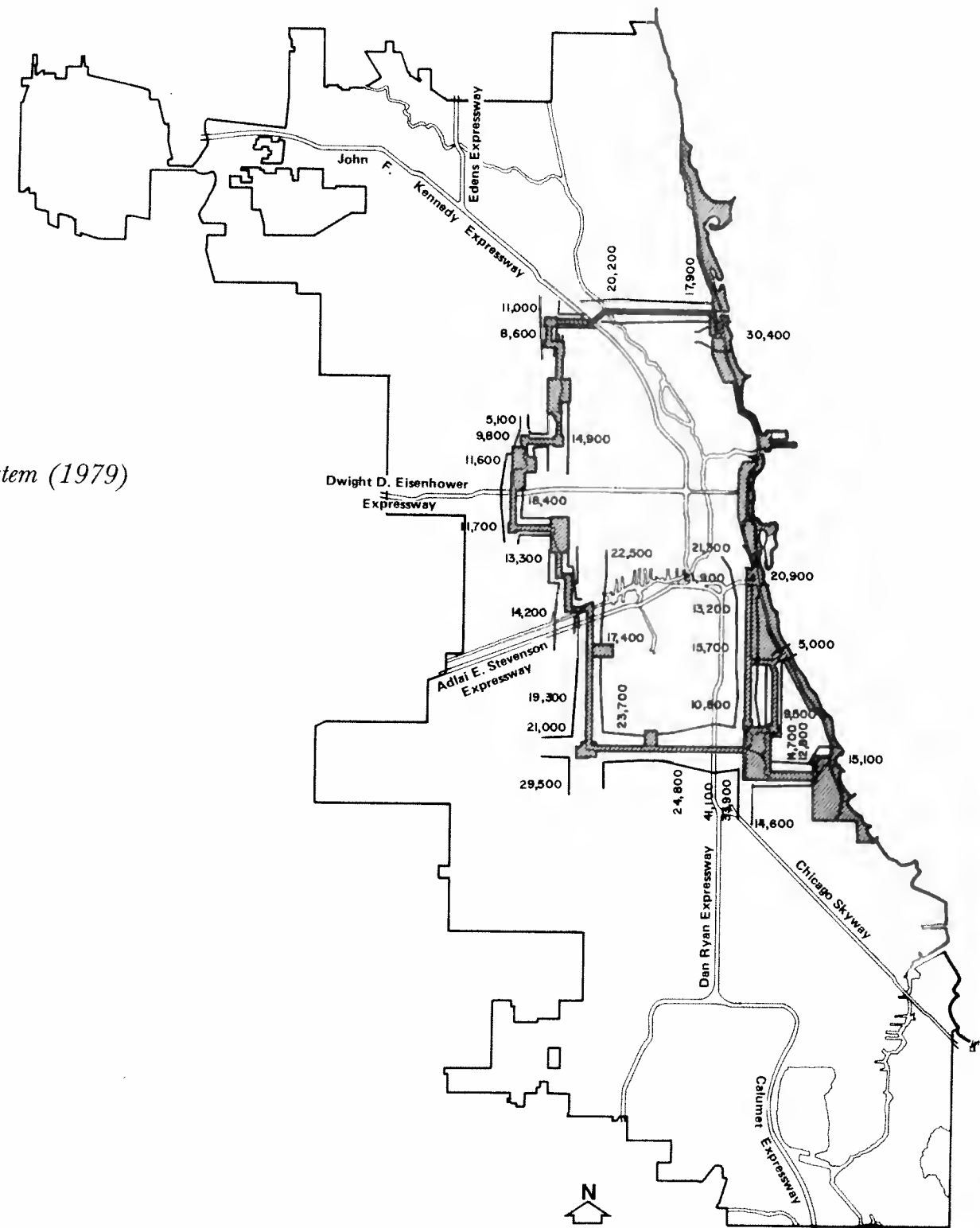
The direct, rotary and channelized traffic patterns linking the squares to the system often produce a break in the flow of boulevard traffic because it no longer has a direct, uninterrupted right-of-way.

With a direct connection, traffic moves next to the square (e.g., Independence Square) directly along the boulevard and onto the next segment or into a park. Although there may be intersecting streets and other roadways within the square, the major flow of traffic moves straight along the boulevard system. The pattern, one of the oldest used to maintain continuous movement of boulevard traffic, tends to conserve open space within the squares.

A rotary connection moves traffic around a center island in a one-directional circle, which can be entered and exited via the outermost traffic lane. Since multiple lanes are needed at points where traffic enters or exits the rotary pattern, pedestrians may have difficulty reaching the center of the square, especially when traffic volume is heavy. The process of merging and diverging traffic is only safe at low speeds and when enough space exists to maneuver a vehicle.

Rotary traffic patterns are rare in Chicago. The two rotaries in the boulevard system are abridged: Logan Square is bisected by Milwaukee Avenue, and Palmer Square has been cut through by Sacramento/Humboldt and Kedzie boulevards. Traffic signals have been installed at both squares.

*Map V-2  
Daily Traffic Volumes  
Along the Boulevard System (1979)*





Channelized intersections along the boulevard (such as those adjacent to Garfield and Sacramento squares where traffic lanes are isolated from the rest of the traffic to facilitate turns) permit continual on and off movement to or from a major arterial. Since the boulevard system has become secondary to Chicago's grid pattern, channeled boulevard squares are often tricky and misleading. Channeled intersections increase pavement areas and, consequently, have reduced available open space.

### *Volume*

According to 1979 traffic data, Palmer Square, Humboldt, Oakwood, and the westernmost segment of Logan boulevards have the lowest daily traffic volume, averaging under 5,000 cars per day. Most of the boulevards have daily traffic volumes in the range of 5,000 to 15,000 vehicles per day. Diversey Parkway, Independence and Garfield boulevards and sections of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive have volumes between 15,000 and 41,000 vehicles per day. The busiest boulevard is Garfield with 41,000 vehicles per day, from Halsted to the Dan Ryan, and 33,900 vehicles from the Dan Ryan to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive. (Map V-2)

Traffic volume on most residential streets in Chicago is far less than 5,000 vehicles per day, and major arterial (mile grid) streets range from 15,000 to 30,000. A volume of over 30,000 vehicles per day usually occurs in heavily used commercial areas and, as evidenced with Garfield and Independence boulevards, at the major entrances and exits of expressways.

### *Speed Limits*

A 30-mile-per-hour speed limit is posted along the boulevards, and most traffic tends to move at between 28 and 35 miles per hour unless it is hampered by traffic signal timing. Traffic signals are located at mile and half-mile streets and at quarter-mile streets in the more congested areas.

According to Urban Land Institute standards, roadways such as the boulevards can handle speeds of 35 to 45 miles per hour. However, speeds over 30 miles per hour within an urban area present many disadvantages: reduced pedestrian safety, increased noise and a less pleasant driving experience. For residents along the boulevards, increased traffic noise would be oppressive.

### *Buses and Freight Vehicles*

Restrictions on the type of traffic allowed on the boulevards still exist. Delivery and freight vehicles are prohibited from using the boulevards, and bus transportation is restricted to certain segments.

Today, bus service is permitted on four of the boulevard segments next to major mile and half-mile streets: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, Garfield Boulevard, Sacramento Boulevard, and Diversey Parkway. Service also is provided on the arterial roadways paired with Western and California boulevards. Buses operate on the Midway Plaisance to service the 59th Street commuter rail station and along Drexel Boulevard to provide service between the Loop and the south lakefront communities.

### *Pedestrian vs. Auto Traffic*

Although the scenic character of the boulevards has changed to accommodate automobile traffic, boulevard medians have continued to be used for recreational purposes. Heavy auto traffic, however, restricts the use of the medians for community events, neighborhood functions and recreational purposes and it destroys vegetation.

### *Overhead Bridges*

Most of the overhead bridges along the boulevards were designed as part of the original system and persist as important visual elements. All reflect a rugged solidity that is characteristic of turn-of-the-century bridge work in Chicago. Several—especially those on Humboldt, Independence and 31st boulevards—have Prairie School detailing.

Today, these overhead bridges require extensive rehabilitation. Almost systemwide, pedestrian areas leading to and under the bridgeways need to be improved. Cracked sidewalks, standing water and poor lighting are common problems associated with most bridgeways. In addition, several of the reinforced concrete structures suffer from spalling (i.e., crumbling) and cracking with the most severe being those bridges on 31st and Independence boulevards.

Railroad and other reinforced steel bridges have been defaced with commercial advertising, consisting of either billboards or signs painted on the bridge surface. Many of the median sur-

faces under these bridgeways are hard surface areas of concrete or asphalt in varying states of deterioration.

### *Boulevard and Parkway Landscaping*

The vegetation along Chicago's boulevard system, more than any other element, defines its character and establishes the system's continuity. Three basic tree-planting patterns define the landscape that exists along the system today:

- formal plantings, characterized by regimented rows of shade and ornamental trees;
- informal plantings, consisting of groves and masses of shade and ornamental trees; and
- parklike plantings, distinguished by grouped areas of shade trees interspersed with isolated specimen and ornamental trees.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive, between 35th and 51st streets, is an example of a formal planting in which sixteen rows of six trees are regimented in each median strip. An informal planting, incorporating shade and ornamental trees, exists in the median of Western Boulevard. Most of the parklike landscapes are located in the squares of the system and along medians that are wide enough to support open lawn areas.

The topography of the boulevard system is flat, rising and falling only where it was constructed to accommodate over- and underpasses. Slopes within the medians are minimal, with most medians only slightly sloped for drainage and, in some instances, for landscape interest and screening.

All of the roadway drainage along the boulevards was installed as a part of the City's combined sewer and run-off system. While most of the drainage on the medians is natural, some catch basins have been installed to drain broader lawn areas. Slopes have also been constructed to permit water to drain into street sewers. However, poor surface drainage persists at many locations within the medians: low and compacted areas in actively used bus stops, crossing sidewalks at major intersections, and active recreation sections.

### *Median and Parkway Trees*

A variety of factors are causing the decline of many of the

trees lining the system. Crowded space, lack of nutrients, irregular moisture, compacted soil, underground utilities, maturity (age) of trees, neglect and lack of maintenance, disease and insects, salt conditions and air-borne pollutants associated with vehicular traffic combine to adversely affect the growth and lifespan of these trees. These problems were compounded by the drought of summer 1988, which killed an unprecedented number of boulevard trees.

Since tree-planting programs have been curtailed over past years because of dwindling tax dollars, the distribution of mature and young trees is not well balanced. The disproportional share of mature trees will become more significant as these trees die and require removal. Many mature trees are simply surviving, rather than thriving in their environment.

Older trees on the medians are 50 to over 100 years old. Although the typical lifespan of many trees in their native habitat ranges from 100 to 200 years, recent studies suggest that the average lifespan of trees growing under urban conditions today may be only 25 to 30 years (*Weeds, Trees and Turf*, 1984).

Weed or self-seeding tree species such as the Tree of Heaven (*Ailanthus altissima*) and the Common Mulberry (*Morus P.*) are not as prevalent along the boulevard system as in other areas of the city. Both of the trees are nuisances because they are aggressive and weak wooded. Although these species have been kept in check by mowing operations, they often grow in areas that cannot be mowed—along fences, bridges and walls or at the base of other trees.

Furthermore, the planting of a limited number of species, primarily honey locust (*Gleditsia sp.*), maple (*Acer sp.*), and ash (*Fraxinus sp.*) has created the potential for a measurable loss of plantings due to disease, insect infestation or environmental stresses of particular species. Species diversity is critical to survival of the urban forest. Recent history illustrates the point. The Dutch Elm disease was particularly devastating because of the extensive, uniform plantings of the species in the neighborhoods.

Budgetary reductions have also limited the number of trees and species being nurtured at City nursery facilities. Since City parkway standards have restricted the use of ornamentals, shrubs and evergreens on the medians, the limited availability of plantings has been further complicated. Shrubs and evergreens, once prolific along some boulevard segments, barely exist today.



*The flora give the boulevards their character*

The combined effect of the decline in both the quality and the diversity of trees and shrubs in the boulevard medians is severe. As a result, the special significance of boulevards as urban parkways is being lost.

Like the median areas of the boulevards, the parkways are also lacking a number of trees, and those that do exist are usually in poor condition. Many of the newly planted trees are suffering from neglect and, in some cases, poor planting practices. Numerous trees have been improperly staked or not staked at all. Although not always critical, staking is useful to protect trees from vandalism and lawnmower. Similarly, cropping and mulching can also help, but are also sometimes neglected.



Many trees were lost to Dutch Elm disease

### *Turf Areas*

To a passing motorist, most of the system appears to have adequate turf; however, a closer examination indicates that the existing turf is in extremely poor condition. In fact, many turf areas have become weed infested and their quality and vigor reduced.

Most of the turf areas were established many years ago with grass mixtures that required a constant program of mowing, fertilizing, watering, weeding, reseeding and soil aerating to maintain a vigorous turf cover. While cutbacks in labor, equipment and maintenance supplies have contributed to the loss of quality turf areas, increased roadway maintenance practices have accelerated the process. Salting snow-covered roads has caused saline soil conditions on the medians and parkways that have effectively destroyed the turf in the first 10 to 15 feet behind the curbs. This destructive saline soil condition is also present in the median centers where ponding occurs.

Driving and parking of cars on the medians coupled with public improvement projects such as curb and walk repairs have also caused damage. Turf restoration along improvement areas is usually limited to seeding rather than sodding the affected areas.

### *Floral Areas*

The Bureau of Street Operations and Beautification has attempted to preserve the historic character of the boulevards by locating flower beds in historically documented locations. In the 1980s, the closing of the Bureau's greenhouse facility greatly reduced the number of available plants. Because of limited funds and staffing within the Bureau, flower beds along the boulevards have dwindled in number, size and quality. Today, most of the flower beds are barely visible to passing motorists.

Because of an increased emphasis on flowering plants, the Bureau of Street Operations and Beautification has been authorized to construct a greenhouse and nursery. In this facility, the Bureau will develop flowers from seeds, diversify its plants and provide more flowering plants to areas adjacent to the boulevards.

## *Recommendations*

### *Landscaping*

- Plant groups of large trees along the lengths of boulevard medians and parkways to define and form patterned spaces, or to reinforce or subdivide the spaces already created by buildings lining the streets. A healthy stand of parkway trees should create appropriate scale, separate traffic from pedestrian ways and improve safety.
- Locate shade trees to enhance the present arrangement of buildings, open spaces, trees, plants, roadways, sidewalks, monuments and fountains.
- Apply three basic patterns of shade trees along the major portion of the boulevard system to create continuity and a definite identity:

**Formal plantings** reinforce the linear nature of boulevard segments with formal plantings characterized by regimented rows and other geometric arrangements of trees. Often this is the only arrangement that will fit in very narrow planting spaces along the boulevards.

**Informal plantings** use masses of shade trees curving through the medians on wider boulevard segments or segments where a pattern of regimented rows no longer exists. Short boulevard segments, identified earlier as transition zones, should receive similar planting treatment.

**Park-like plantings** accent certain views or changes in building type or land use with distinct groupings of trees separated by significant, strategically positioned gaps. Plant parklike arrangements on long segments to provide a variety of spaces with sunny and shady conditions, especially on east-west routes.

### *Boulevard Entrances (Figure V-2)*

- Construct seven distinctive entryways marked by standardized boulevard system signs at expressway entrances and exits to the system and at connections with Lake Shore Drive.
- Emphasize and distinguish the entryways from the rest of the boulevards by breaking the pattern of median shade trees and by planting numerous ornamental trees and shrubs of a few species.

- Provide entrance features visible to traffic entering perpendicular to the boulevard route and traveling along the boulevards.
- Install unique structural features (such as monuments, columns or cluster lighting).
- Install berms with groups and/or lines of a few species of perennial flowers and groundcovers.
- Remove, screen and limit conflicting visual elements (such as commercial signs, billboards, parking areas and utilities).

### Major Intersections (Figure V-3)

- Install special landscaping treatments at boulevard intersections with major commercial streets to distinguish them from less important intersections.
- Install median shade trees in groves of geometric patterns massive enough to contrast with the more dominant linear boulevard planting pattern.
- Extend shade trees down commercial street parkways in both directions from the boulevard.

- Require developers constructing new buildings on corners and commercial street frontage to install and/or accommodate parkway shade trees to conform to the boulevard pattern.
- Arrange plantings to maintain safe visibility at intersections.
- Install crosswalks with special paving material to contrast with the street pavement in color and texture.
- Install walks across medians to connect major commercial street curbs. The walks should be wide enough to handle heavy, two-way pedestrian traffic and should be paved with the same material as street crosswalks.

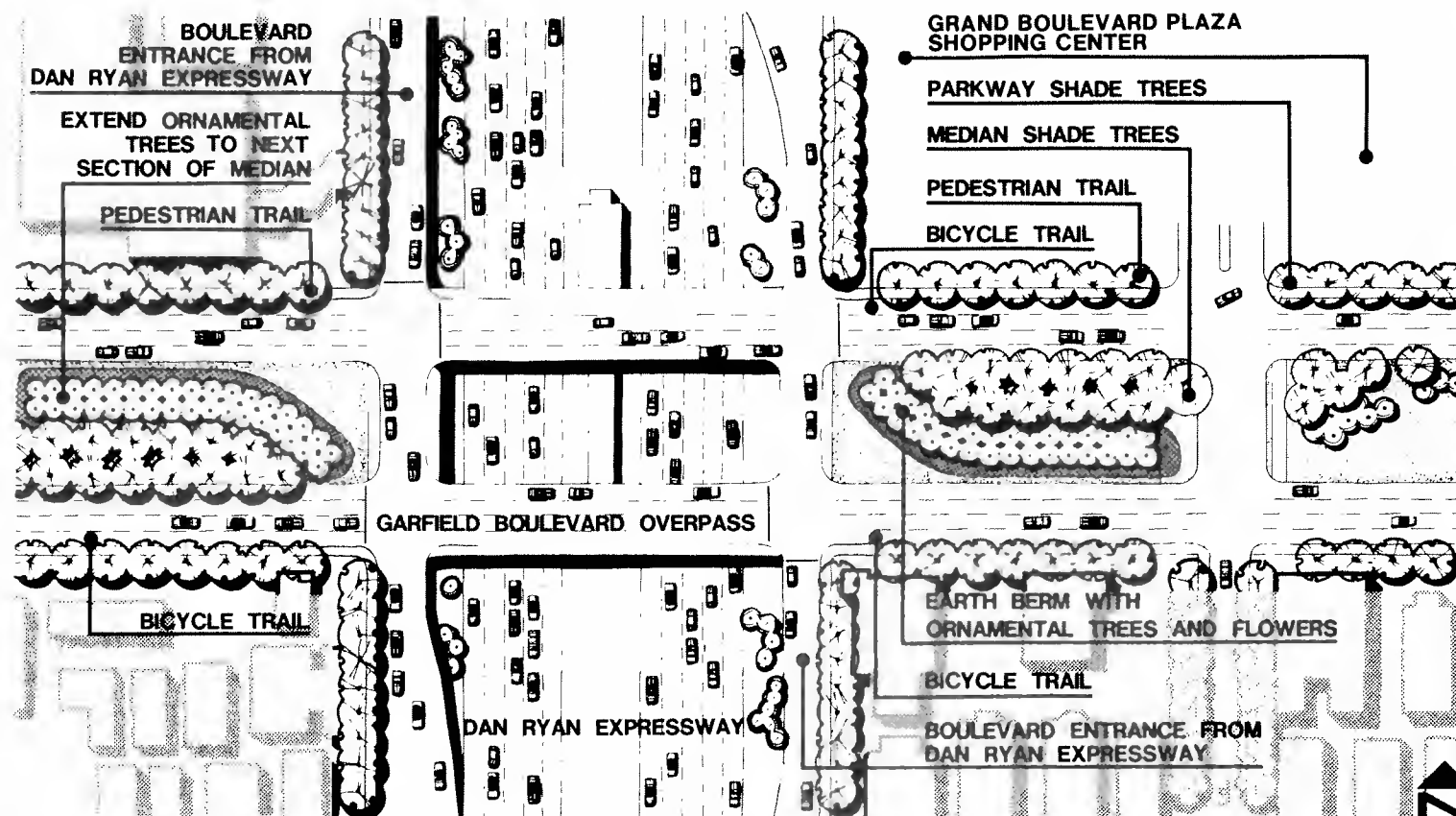


Figure V-2: Example of design recommendations for major entryways to the boulevards

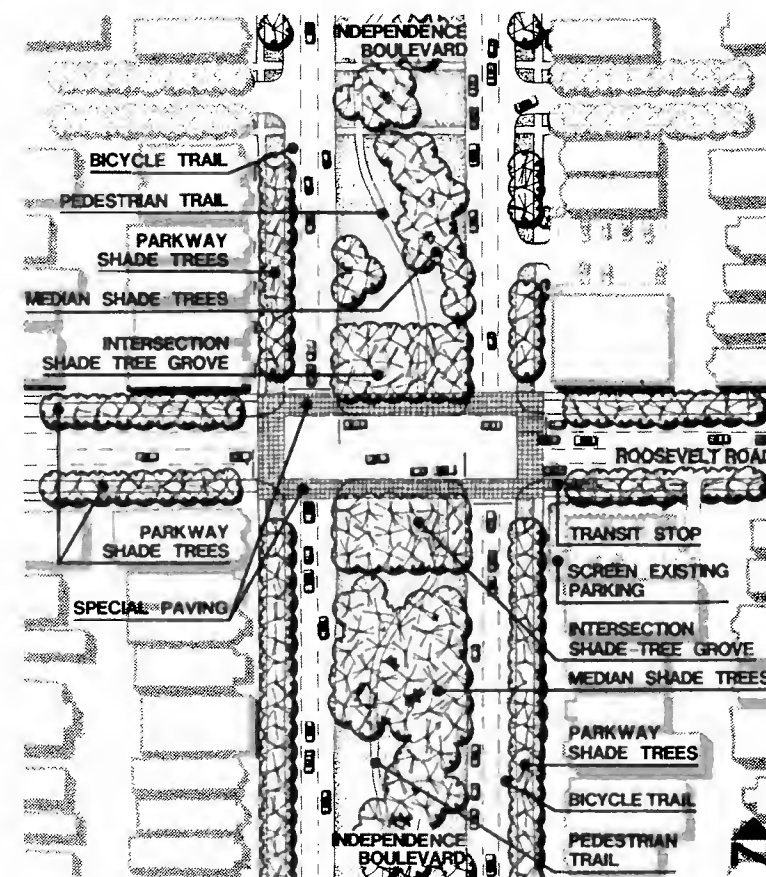
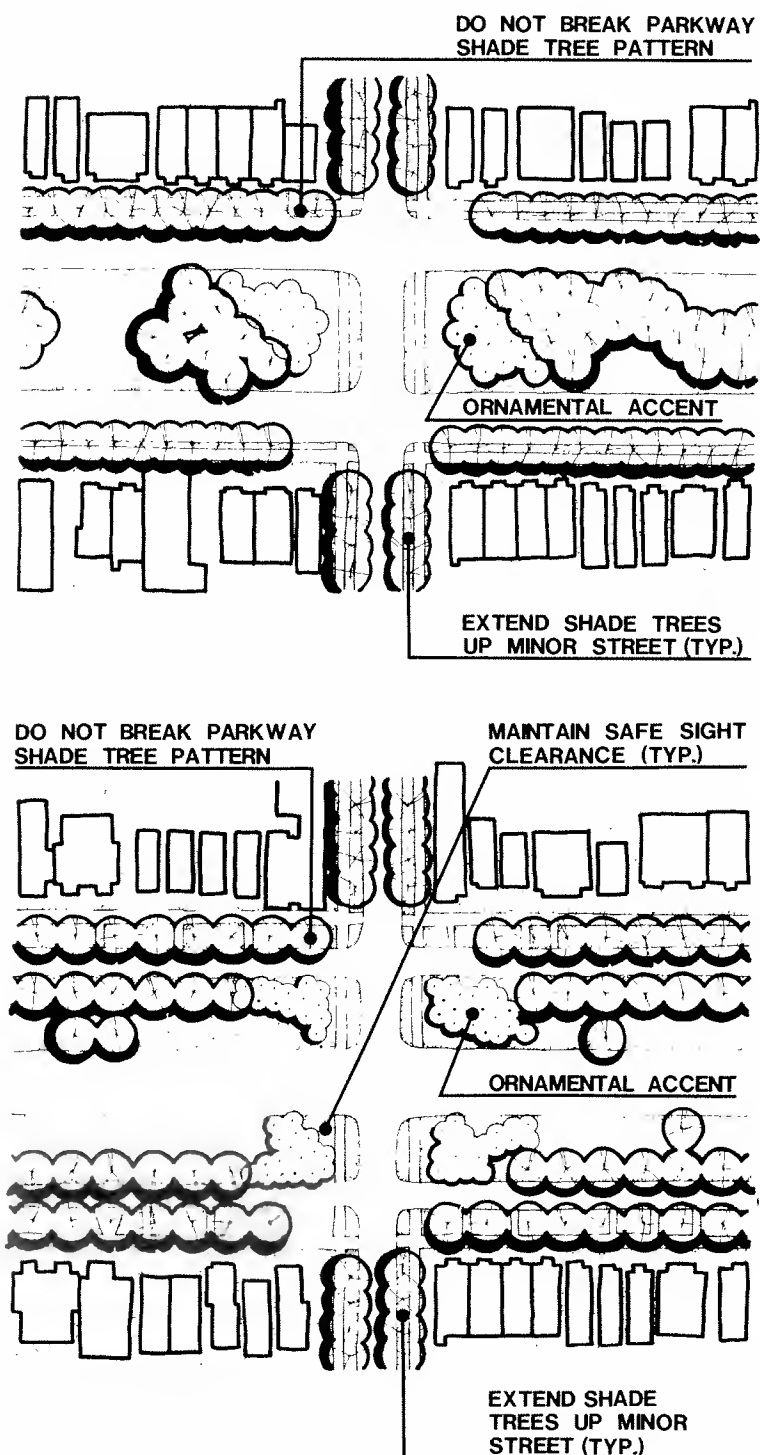


Figure V-3: Example of design recommendations for major intersections





Figures V-4, V-5: Design recommendations for minor intersections

### Minor Intersections (Figures V-4, V-5)

- Install small groupings of ornamental trees in the medians to accent minor intersections that cannot be closed.
- Break the dominant pattern of median shade trees where ornamental trees are planted.

### Park Entrances (see Figures V-6, V-7, V-8)

- Provide intensive landscape features and park signs at points where boulevards cross into parks.
- Extend the intensive landscape treatment into boulevards for several blocks.

- Select landscape styles that fit into existing park and boulevard plantings, i.e., formal, informal, parklike.

### General Systemwide Landscape Improvements

- Separate pedestrian paths from roadway traffic with rows of shade trees on all parkways even along those boulevard segments to be planted with the other arrangements. This pattern should unify the entire boulevard system and define the space for all other boulevard landscaping treatments.
- Maintain mature trees along the boulevards and plant a greater variety of new trees, shrubs and evergreens for year-round greenery.

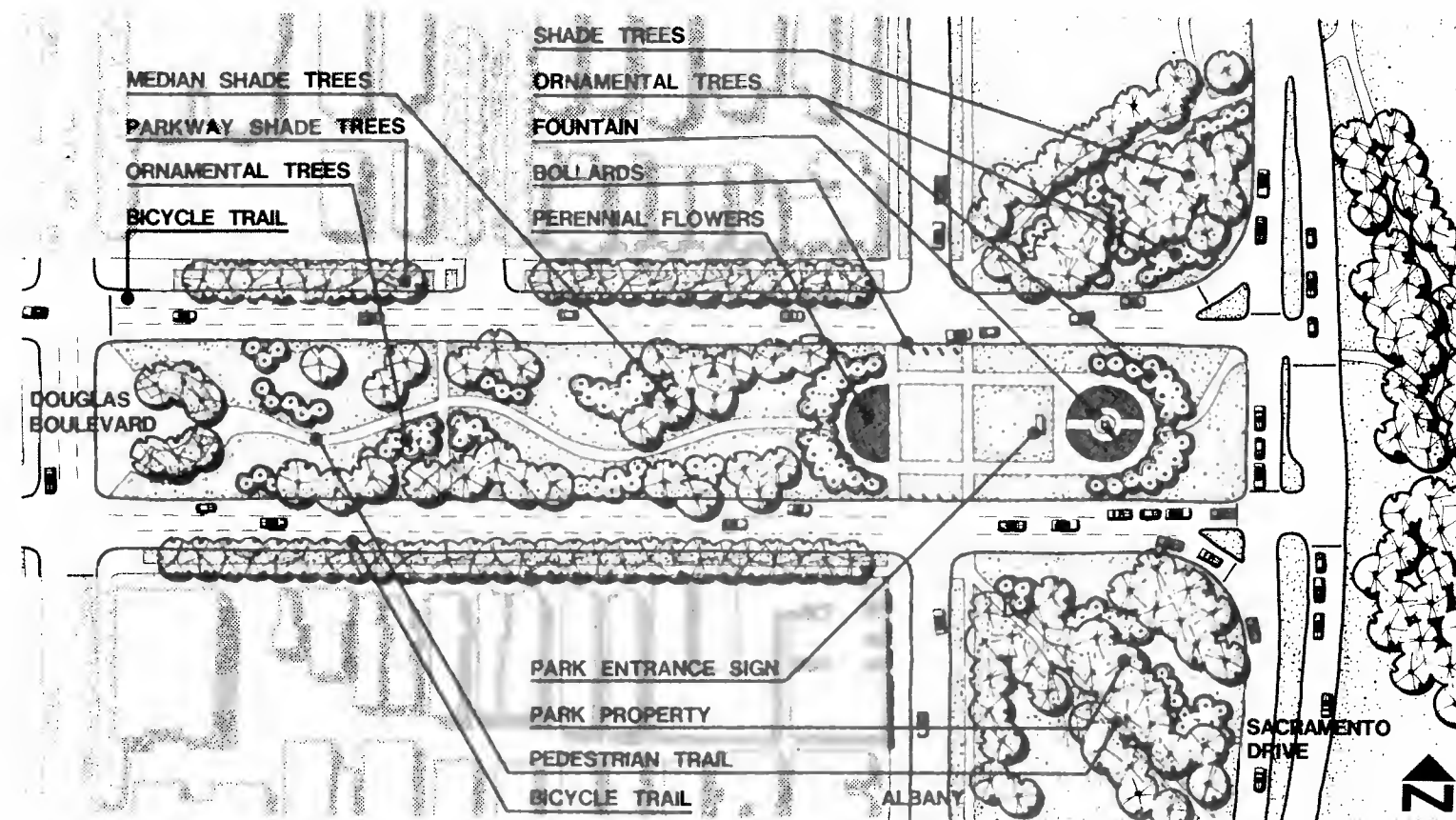


Figure V-6: Design recommendations for the park entrance at Douglas Boulevard/Douglas Park



- Create low berms where compact clay or saline soil problems exist to provide good drainage. Berm development, however, must be approached with caution since the addition of a few inches of soil around some trees will affect the amount of water and air available to the root system.
- Use customized turf mixes of improved grass with a high tolerance for salt, drought, disease and wear and with the ability for rapid recovery. New seeding or slit seeding operations can be used to renovate the existing turf.
- Create floral display areas with tall, large flowers in bold, colorful designs that will be visible to passing traffic. Plant flower beds on gentle slopes to increase visibility, and combine annuals, perennials, bulbs and evergreens to provide an extended seasonal display. Evaluate and plant flowers on the basis of their form, texture, color and seasonal interest—that is, their visual diversity.
- Add woody plants, groundcovers, annuals, perennials and other nonvegetative coverings. A reduction in the turf areas can add diversity and beauty to the urban landscape and can lead to substantial resource savings.
- Emphasize the use of native plants that have adapted to the Midwest's climate and Chicago's urban conditions.
- Include hardy nonnative species that have grown well under Chicago's conditions.
- Fix the watering access boxes (buffalo boxes) on the medians to maintain turf, trees, and plants adequately.

### *Traffic Patterns*

- Set the speed limit at 30 miles per hour. A lower speed limit of 15 or 20 miles per hour would be more appropriate in heavily congested areas and on boulevards adjacent to parks, schools, hospitals and elderly housing. Increase police enforcement of the set speed limits.
- Change the roadway alignment at transition zones to improve vehicle safety and to reinforce the continuity of the system, if possible. Realignments should also include restoring continuous median and parkway vegetation (see Figure V-9).
- Install guardrails, street lights and pedestrian sign lights as necessary.

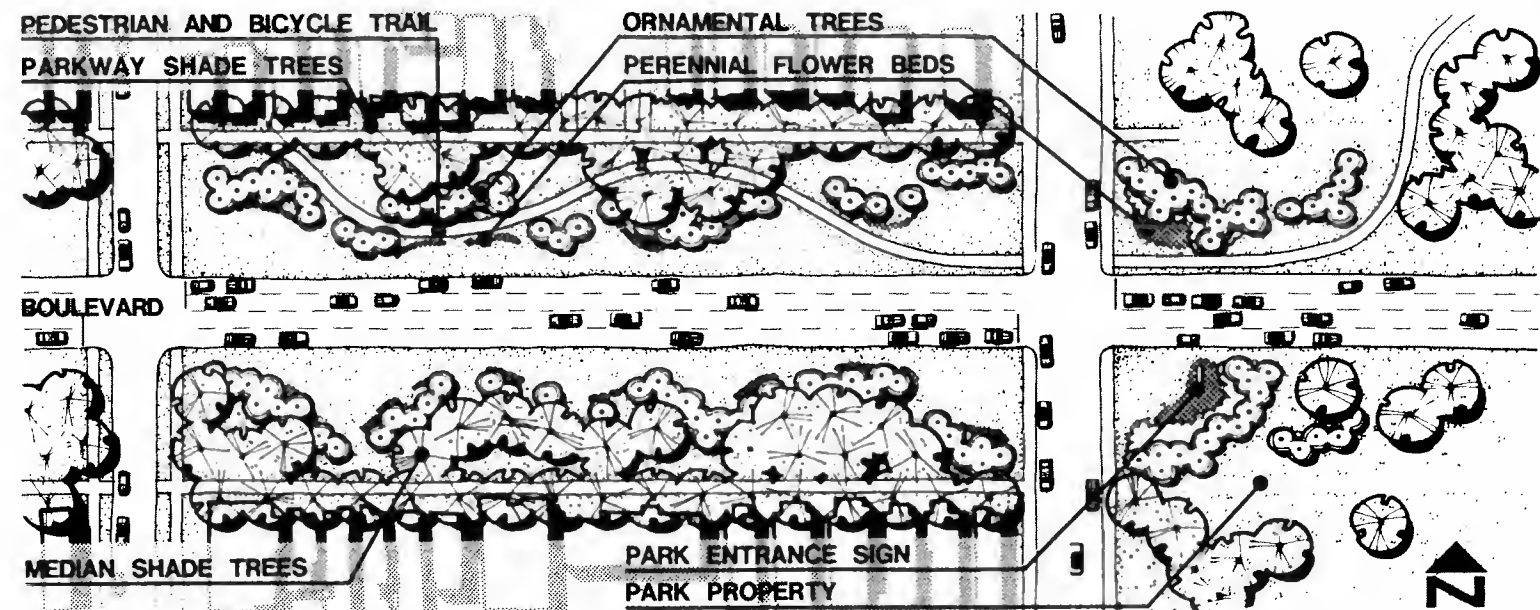


Figure V-7: Design recommendations for park entrances, informal pattern

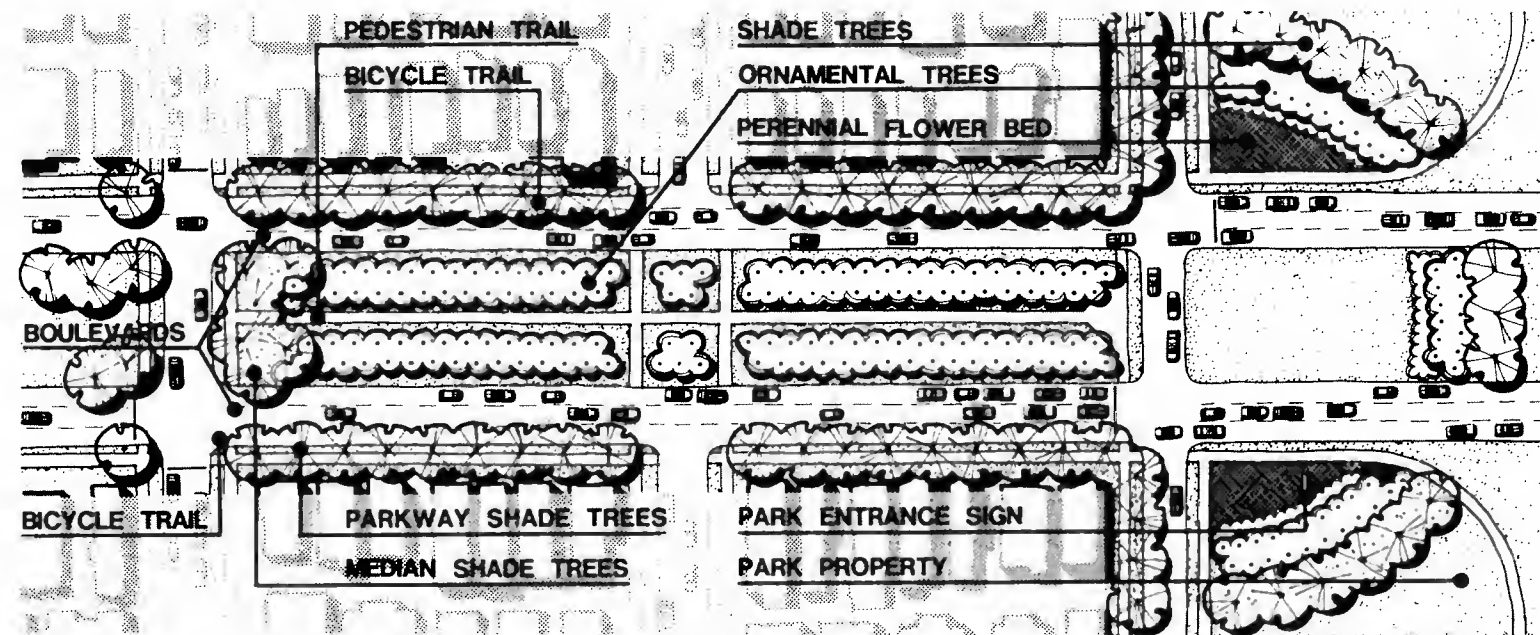


Figure V-8: Design recommendations for park entrances, formal pattern

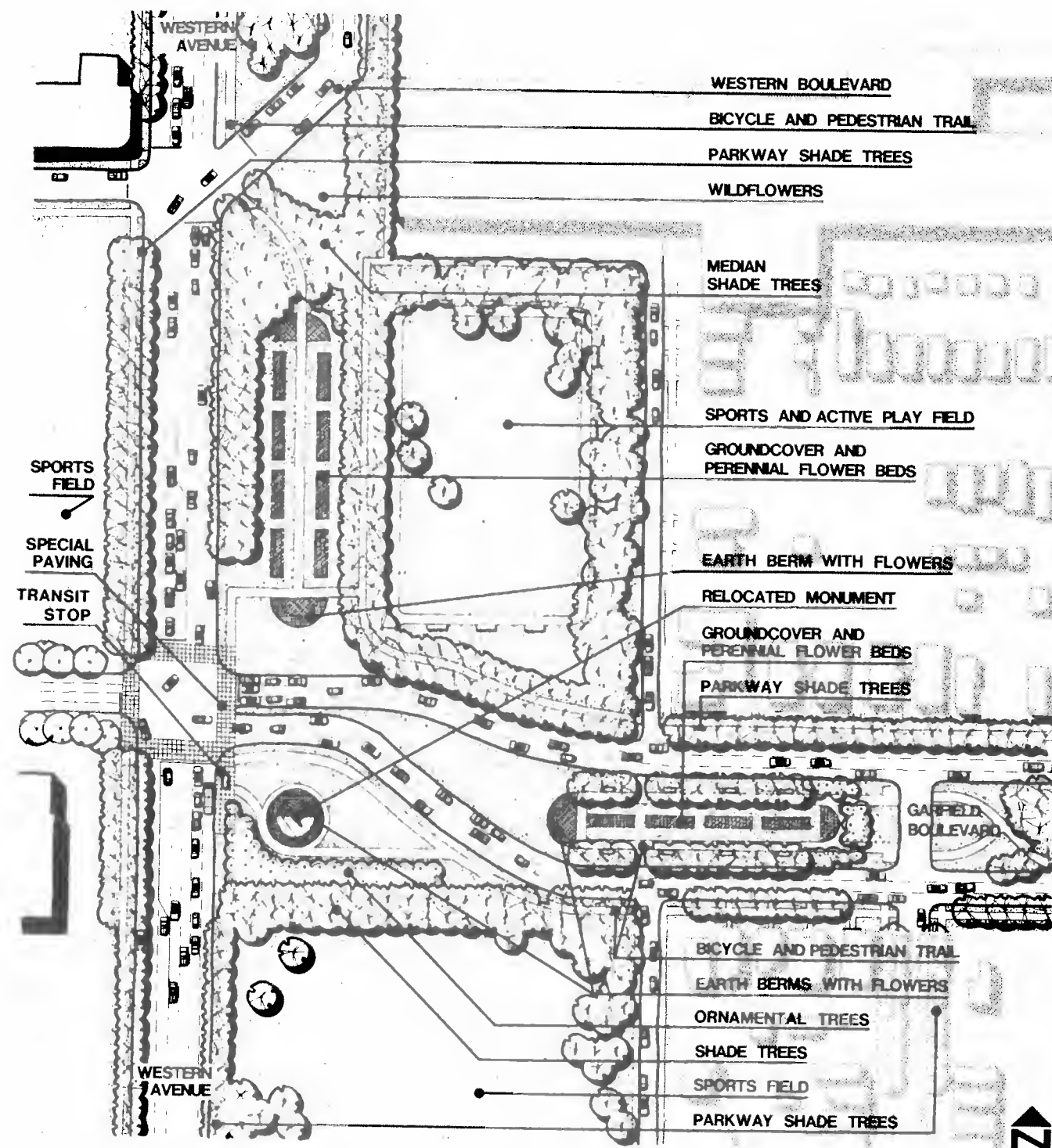


Figure V-9: Realignment of Western Boulevard at Garfield Boulevard

- Discourage parking on heavily traveled segments of the principal boulevard drives.
- Ban right hand turns on red lights, both onto and off of the system. This will reduce the confusion created by parallel service drives and increase the safety of individuals using the center medians.
- Discourage new intersections along the boulevards. When possible, eliminate existing cross traffic from minor streets to improve safety and traffic flow and to lessen intersection maintenance and signing.
- Improve and visually identify major automobile entrances to the system along Lake Shore Drive and the expressways.
- Continue to maintain and enforce the restriction prohibiting freight vehicles from traveling on the boulevard system.

#### *Overhead Bridges*

- Ban commercial advertising on bridges, and remove existing billboards or painted signs.
- Improve drainage, lighting, sidewalks and the paved surfaces under the bridges.
- Remove graffiti and restore community murals.
- Resurface the paved medians under bridges with more attractive materials such as brick, stone, cut block or textured concrete.
- Install railings or other dividing structures to separate pedestrians from auto traffic, as necessary.
- Repair the spalling and cracking of reinforced concrete structures.
- Paint metal surfaces and clean concrete surfaces using restrained earth tone colors such as dark greens, browns or reds. Use different colors for major structural elements to emphasize the interesting design aspects of these structures.
- Remove undesirable trees, vegetation, litter and debris.

### Signs (Figure V-10)

- Develop special standardized graphic signage to identify key points and to further establish the continuity of the system.
- Install directional and street signs using system-wide standardized graphics.
- Group necessary regulatory signs on light and traffic sign poles to reduce visual clutter.
- Install two distinctive types of light poles on the boulevard route, and paint both types in the same standard color.
- Mark and light the pedestrian and bicycle trail system with lights at a lower height.

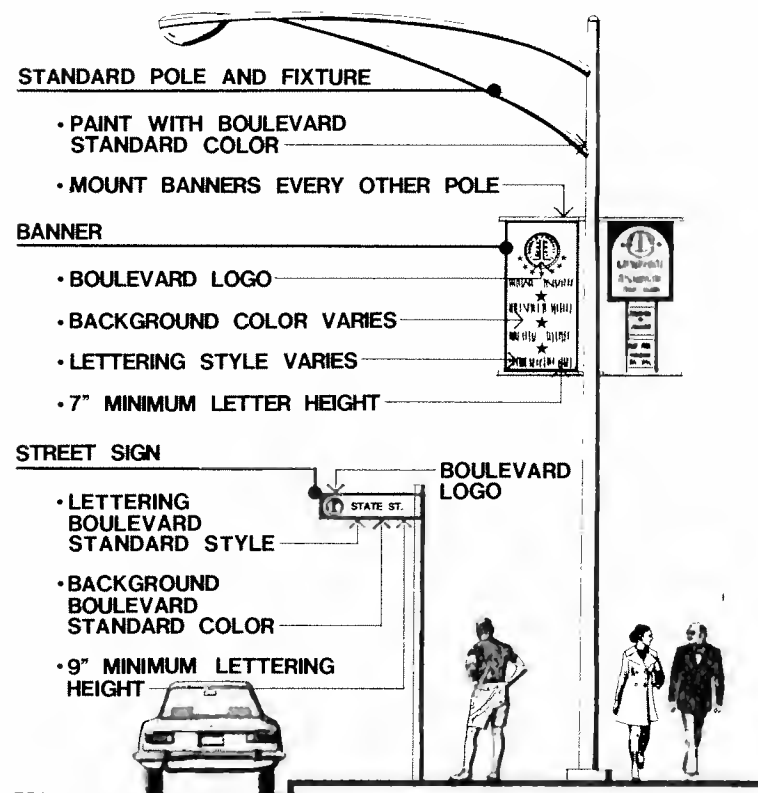


Figure V-10: Example of boulevard signage

### Transit Stops (Figure V-11)

- Regrade ground at transit stops located in medians or parkways to ensure proper drainage.
- Provide an adequate amount of pedestrian paving at bus stops to minimize damage to adjacent turf and plantings.
- Paving at bus stop areas should match pedestrian pavements to be used at major mile intersections.
- Match the design character and details of benches, lighting, etc. with other boulevard site amenities.
- Provide adequate shade at transit stops by planting shade trees.
- Avoid the use of shrubs at transit stops to ensure safe sight clearance and security.
- Install transit information signs consistent with systemwide graphics.

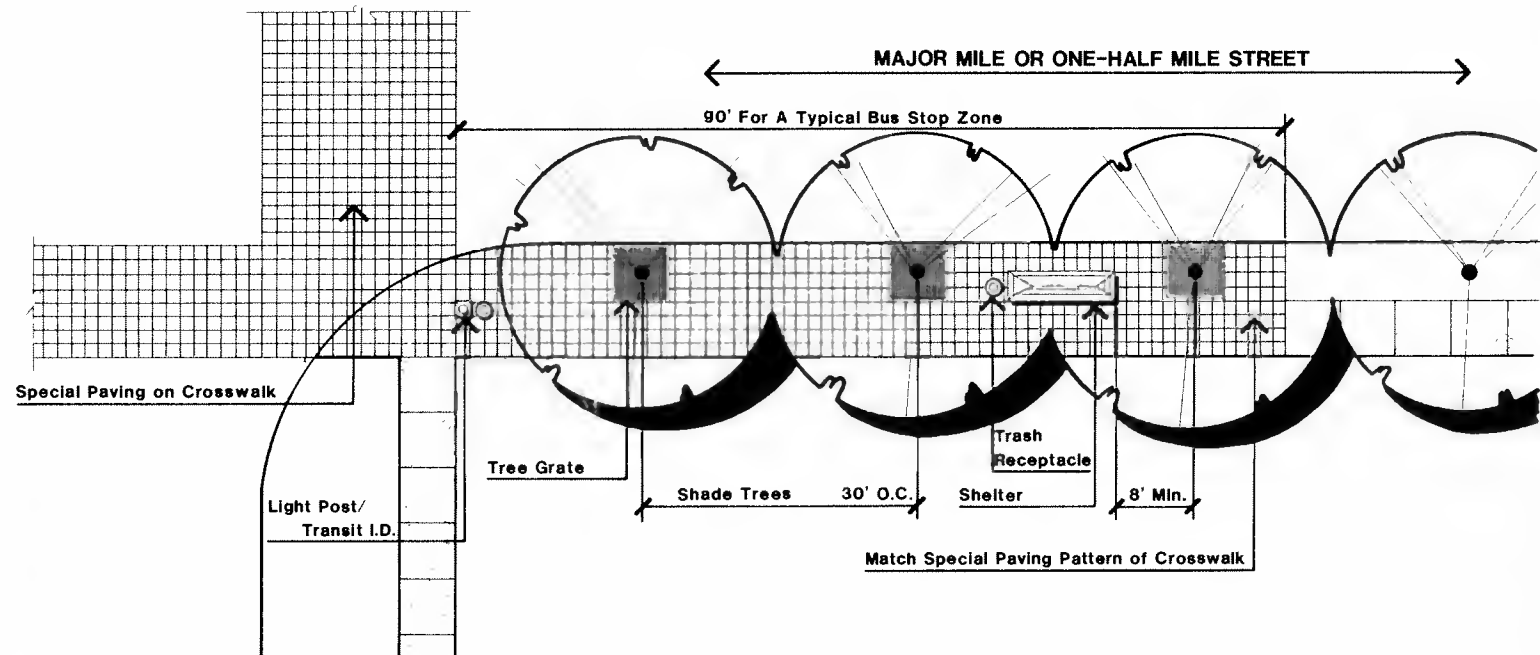


Figure V-11: Example of boulevard transit stops

### Monuments

Another primary attribute of Chicago's boulevard system is the quantity and quality of public sculpture, monuments and fountains along the route. Most of the twelve monuments lining the system occupy highly visible prime sites and are important creations of prominent sculptors (Map V-3).

#### Existing Monuments

Most of the boulevard monuments are in excellent or good condition (see Table V-2). Six of the twelve monuments and/or their surroundings have been restored recently. Restoration work has consisted of cleaning and repair of some of the statues; graffiti removal; repairs to the bases, plazas and fountains; landscaping and, in two instances, the installation of monument lighting. Benches were also installed around the monument at Independence Square.

Map V-3  
Location of Monuments Along the Boulevards

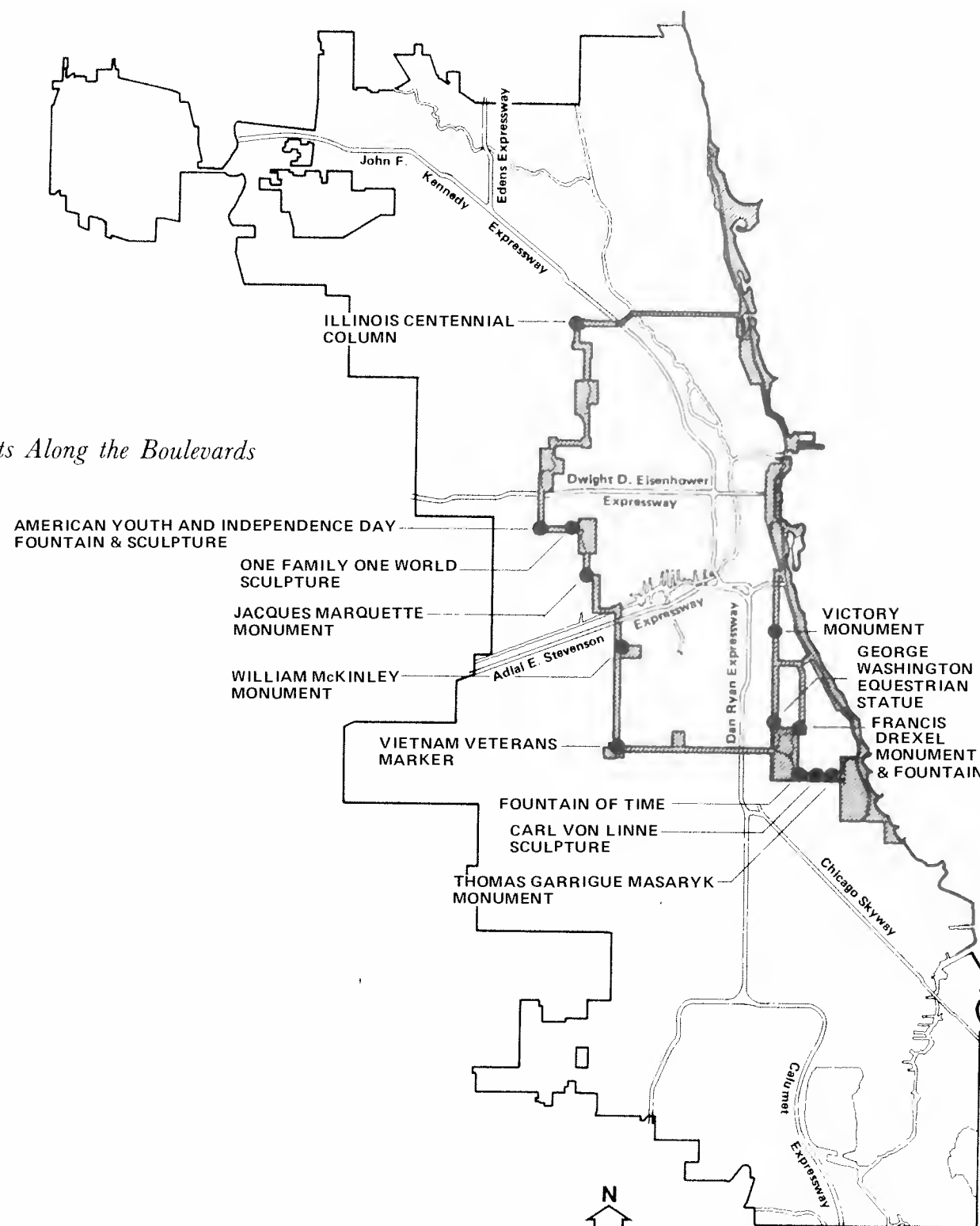


Table V-2 Monument Conditions

	Overall Condition	Pedestrian Environment	Lighting
Francis M. Drexel Monument and Fountain	Good	Good	Fountain
Fountain of Time	Poor	Good	Inadequate
Carl Von Linne Statue	Excellent	Good	None
Thomas Garrigue Masaryk Monument	Good	Poor	None
Victory Monument	Good Plaza Restored 1988	Fair	Inadequate
George Washington Equestrian Statue	Fair	Fair	None
Vietnam Veterans Marker and Flagpole	Good	None	Street Only
William McKinley Monument	Excellent Recently Restored	Fair/ Poor	None
Jacques Marquette Monument	Good Recently Restored	Fair	None
One Family One World	Poor	Poor	Plaza only
American Youth and Independence Day Fountain and Sculpture	Good Restored 1988	Good	Fountain/ Street
Illinois Centennial Column	Excellent Restored 1980	Good	Plaza Only

Two of the monuments are in poor condition: One Family One World (Douglas Boulevard) and the Fountain of Time (Midway Plaisance). The One Family One World monument is in such a serious state of deterioration that it should either be restored or removed. The Fountain of Time, however, presents a more difficult problem. The steel reinforcing bars are exposed, the concrete has worn thin and has cracked and the reflecting pool has settled, cracked, and shifted. This monument has been examined by experts, but, because of its massive size and degree of deterioration, whether or how to proceed with its preservation or restoration has not been decided.



## New Monuments

The current distribution of monuments, markers and embellishments lacks consistency and fails to reinforce the system's continuity. New heroic scale monuments should be considered for key locations at the intersections of boulevard segments and at the entrances of the major parks. Guidelines for new monument installation should be prepared.

## Recommendations

- Develop a capital improvements program to fund monument repair and creation efforts, involving both the public and

private sectors. Make better use of the B.F. Ferguson Fund for restoration efforts.

- Plan landscaping and other elements surrounding each monument with respect to the desired views from pedestrian walkways and the boulevard drive (see Figures V-12, V-13).
- Install ornamental trees, groundcover and perennial flowers to accent and emphasize monument areas.
- Install median shade trees to provide a uniform background for primary views of the monuments from the boulevards.
- Remove or relocate structures on public rights-of-way that detract from the beauty of monument sites.

- Provide shaded seating areas, small group gathering spaces, plazas with special paving and other features to make the monument sites attractive for people to use.
- Install night lighting to highlight the monuments and to discourage vandalism.
- Identify each monument with a sign that includes the name, sculptor and a short history of the monument.
- Relocate monuments as necessary to improve their visibility and landscaping treatments.

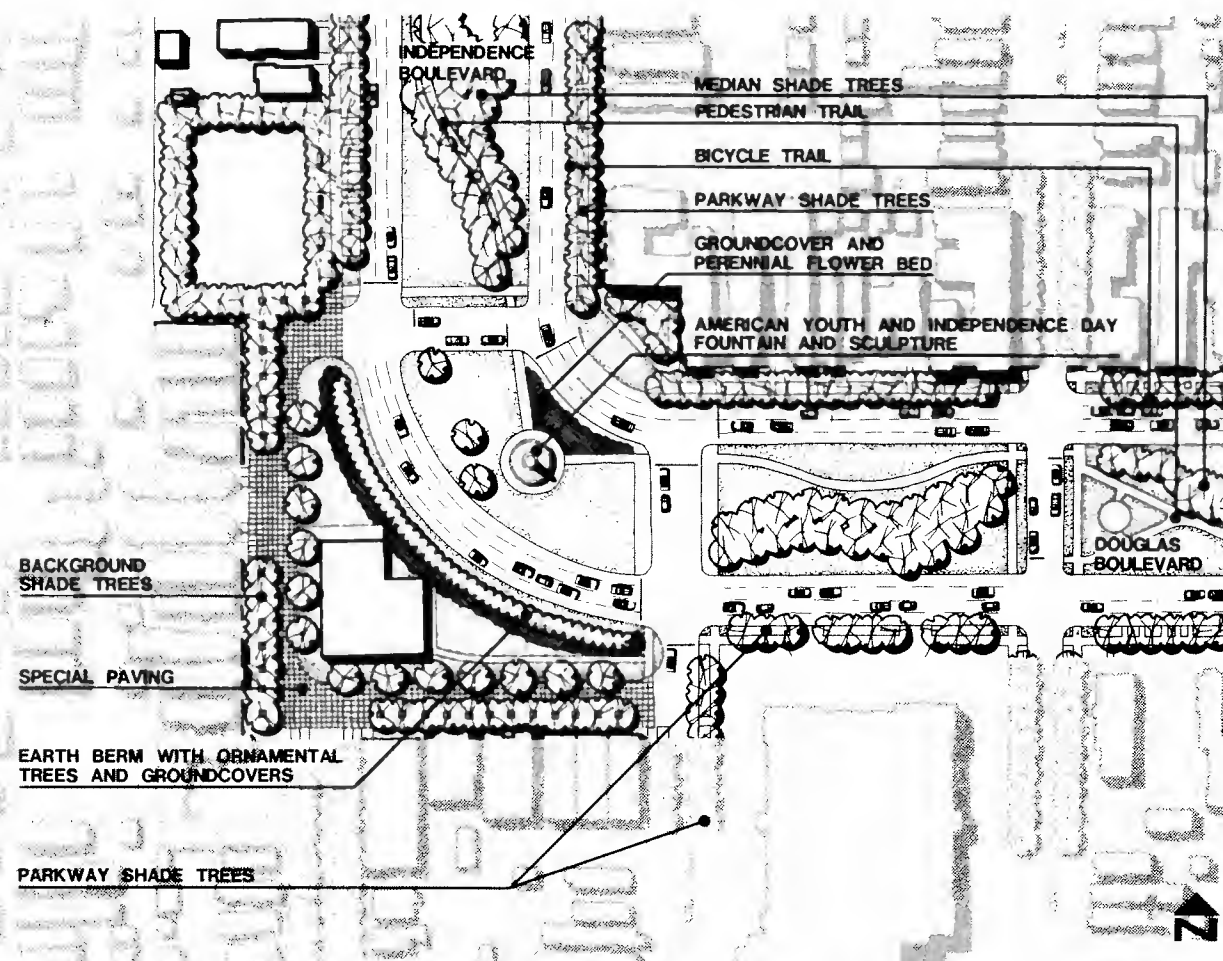


Figure V-12: Example of recommended improvements at Independence Square monument site

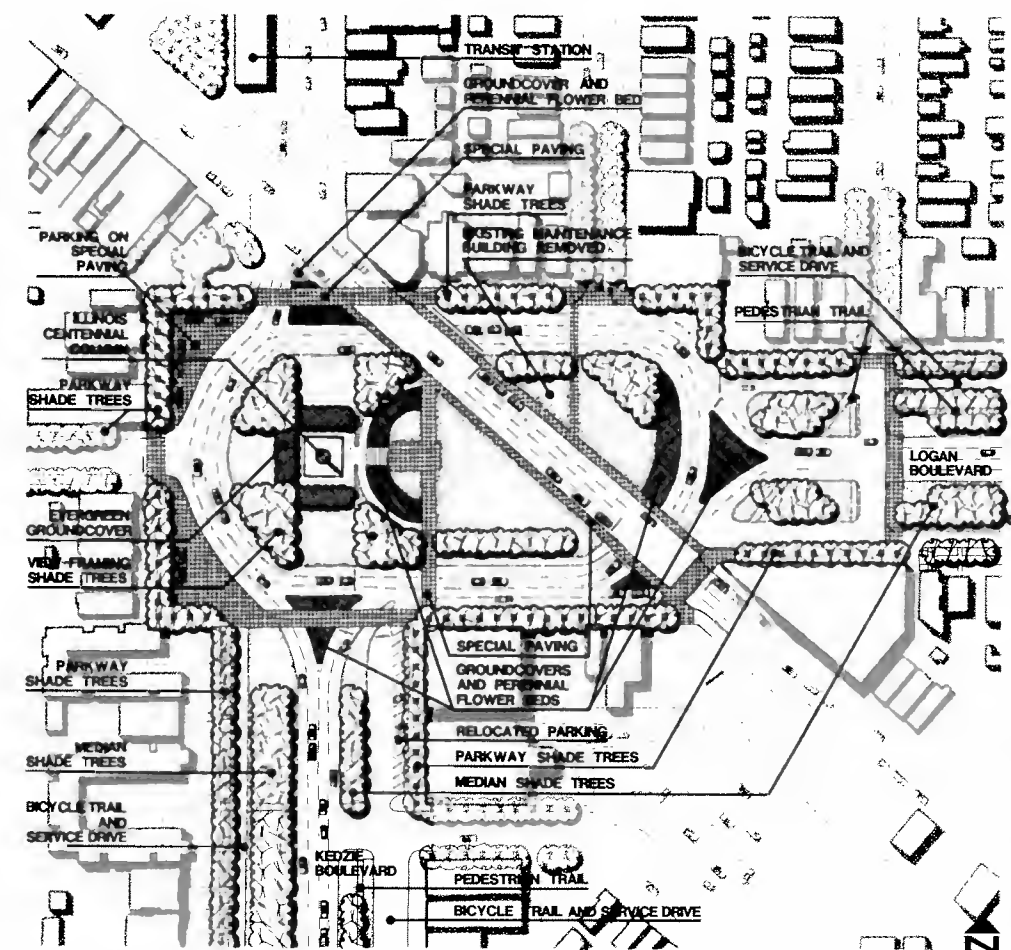


Figure V-13: Example of recommended improvements at Logan Square



- Use areas surrounding the monuments for festivals and other neighborhood and community events (Figures V-14, V-15).
- Encourage the construction of new monuments along the boulevards at key locations (Figure V-16).

## Monuments Along Chicago's Boulevard System

### Francis Drexel Monument and Fountain

This elaborate fountain, which is surmounted by the life-size figure of Francis M. Drexel, was donated in 1881 to the City of Chicago by Drexel's sons Francis, Jr., and Anthony. Francis Drexel was a Philadelphia banker who donated the land for what is today Drexel Boulevard and Square. Philadelphia sculptor Henry Manger designed the fountain, located in Drexel Square at the corner of Hyde Park Boulevard.

### Fountain of Time

Often considered the masterpiece of sculptor Lorado Taft, this massive 120-foot-long combination sculpture and reflecting pool is situated at the west end of the Midway Plaisance. It is constructed of steel-reinforced, hollow-cast concrete and commemorates the century of peace between the United States and England, which began with the Treaty of 1814. Commissioned by the B.F. Ferguson Fund, it took 14 years to complete and was dedicated in 1922.

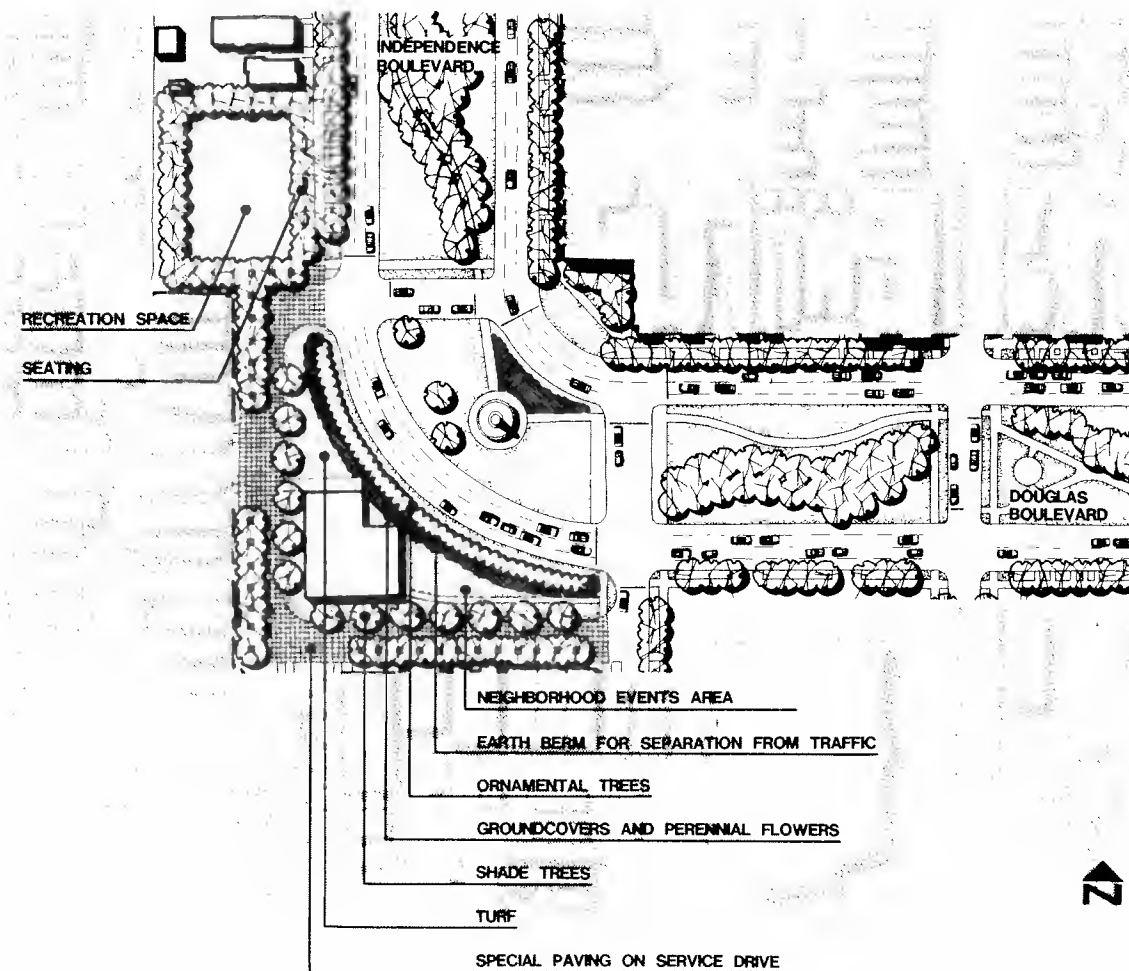


Figure V-14: Recommendations for a neighborhood area, Independence Square

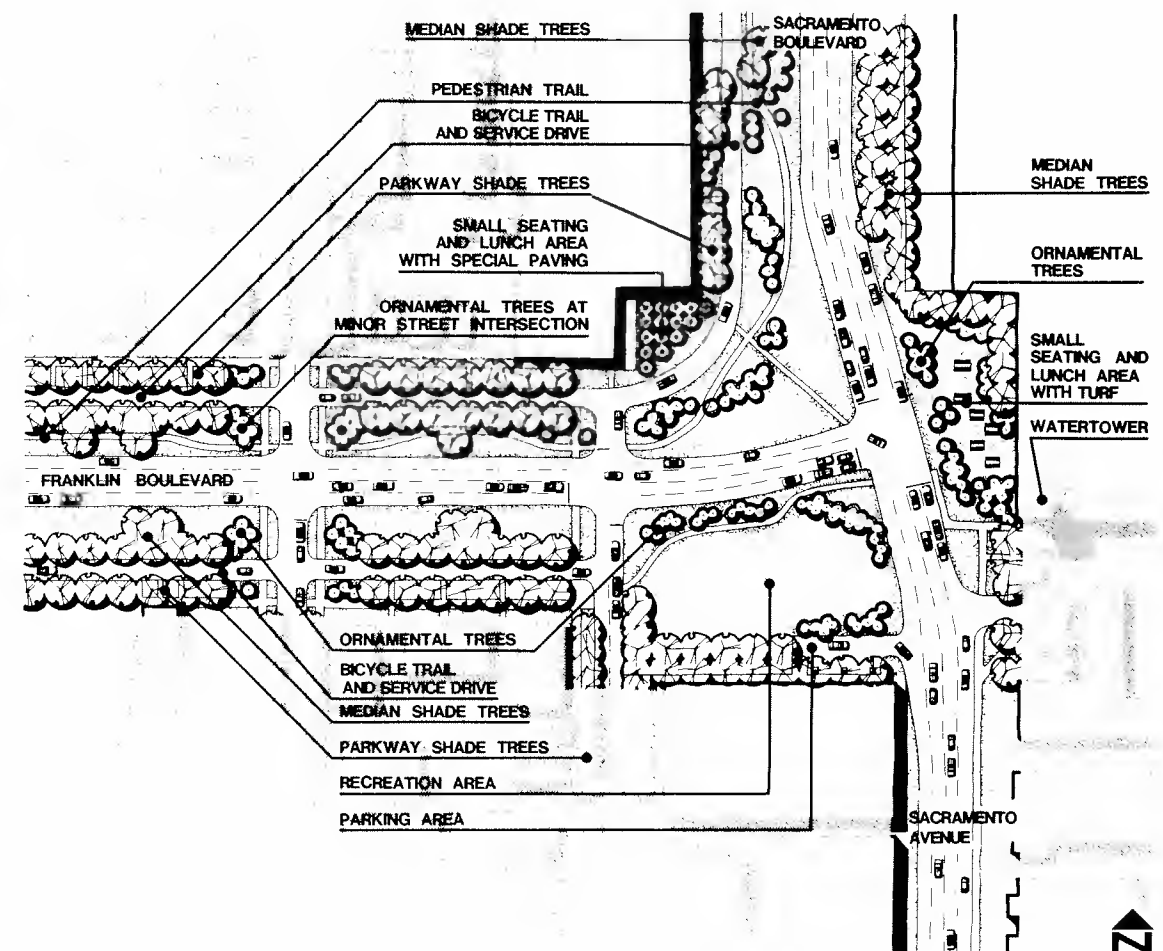


Figure V-15: Recommendations for a neighborhood area, Sacramento Square

### Carl Von Linne Monument

After suffering repeated vandalism, this statue was relocated from Lincoln Park to the Midway Plaisance and rededicated in 1976. It stands near East 59th Street between Ellis and University avenues. This replica of the original in Stockholm by sculptor Johan Dyfverman depicts Carolus Linneaus (original name, Carl Von Linne), the Swedish botanist and originator of the system for classifying and naming plants and animals.

### Thomas G. Masaryk Monument

Dedicated in 1955, this 18-foot-high figure of the medieval knight Saint Wenceslaus is located at the east end of Midway

Plaisance. It is situated on a 20-foot-high granite foundation that sits on a six-stepped base measuring 84 by 64 feet. The work is dedicated to the memory of Thomas G. Masaryk, Czechoslovakia's first president and a member of the 1902 University of Chicago faculty. The sculptor was Czech-born Albin Polasek, then head of the sculpture department of the Art Institute of Chicago.

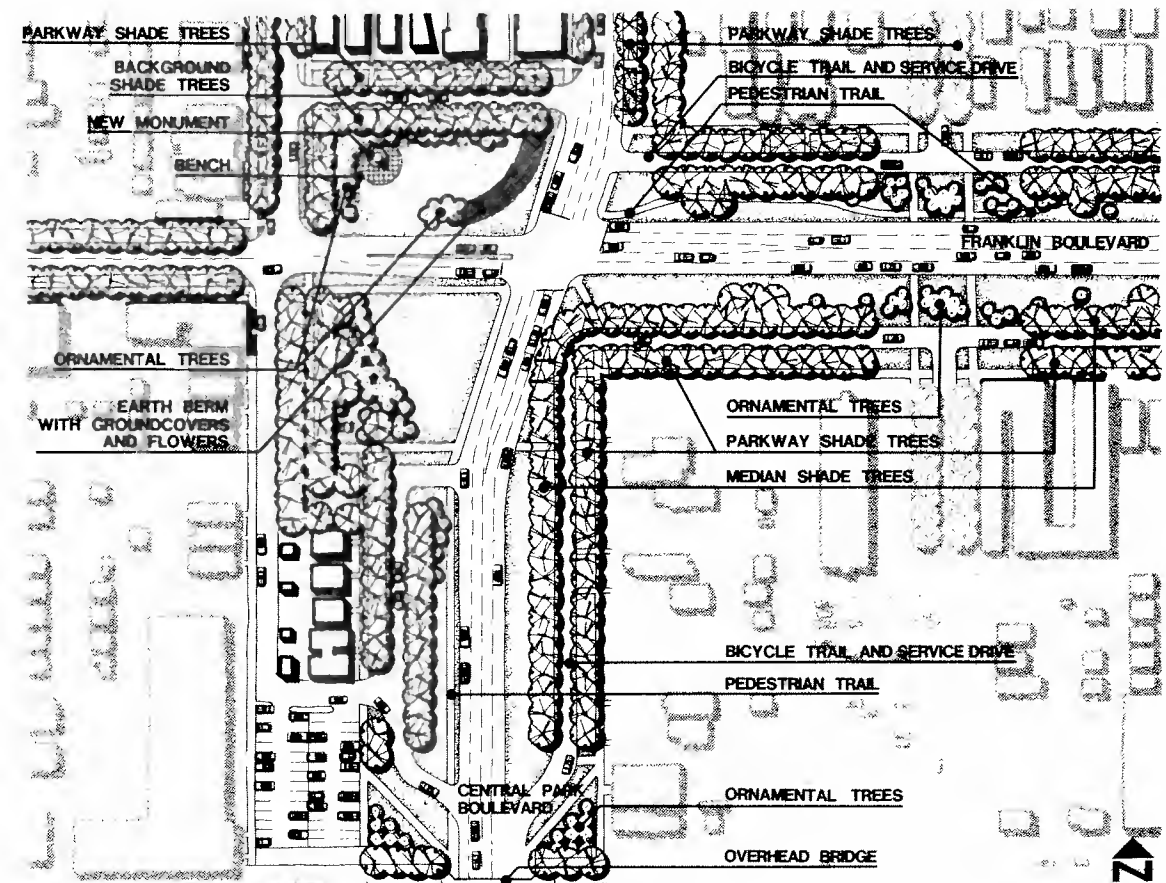
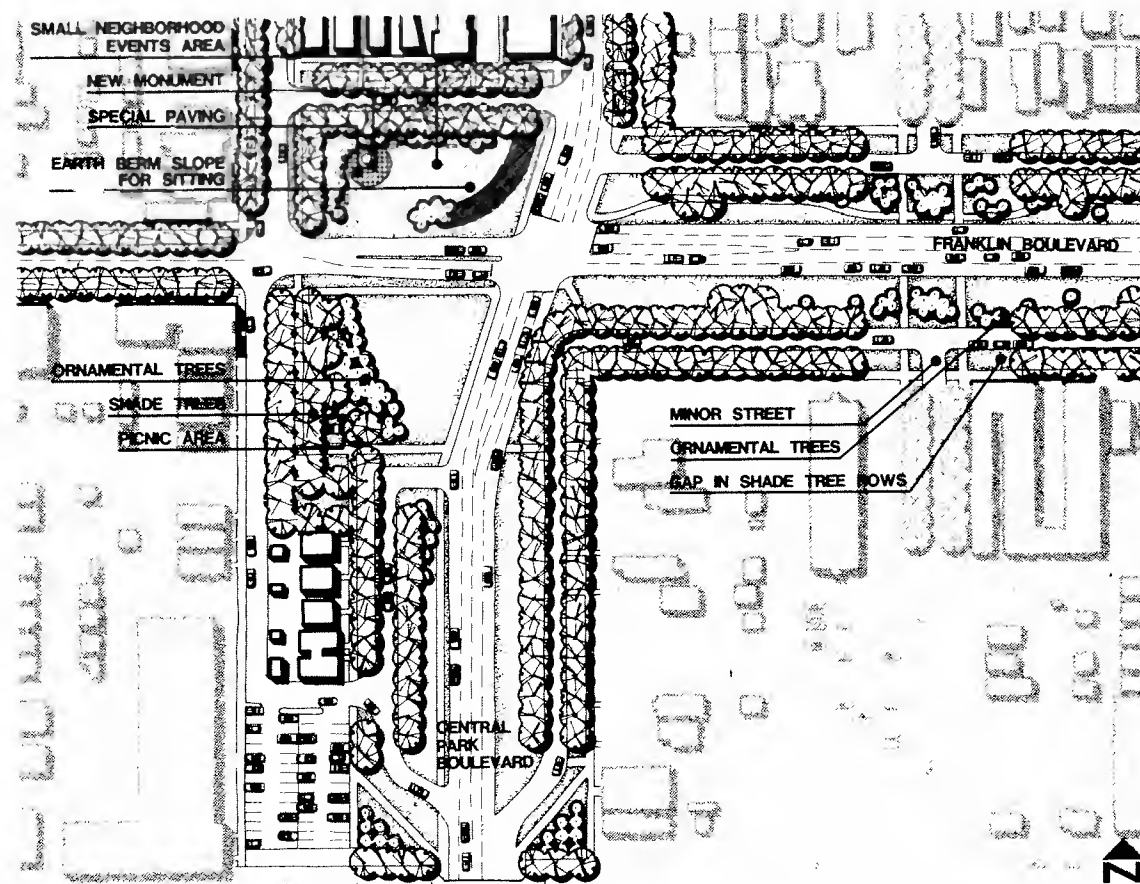
### Victory Monument

The Victory Monument is located in the center median of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive at 35th Street. The columnar base of the monument was erected in 1927 by the State of

Illinois as a memorial to Black soldiers from Illinois who died in World War I battles. In 1936, the "doughboy" bronze sculpture was added on top of the column. The sculptor was French-born Leonard Crunelle.

### George Washington Equestrian Statue

This equestrian statue is dramatically set on the center line of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Drive at 51st Street. It is a replica of the original in Paris, France and was the result of a collaborative effort between sculptors Daniel Chester French and Edward C. Potter. French created the figure of Washington while Potter created the figure of the horse. This bronze sculpture, set on a red granite pedestal, was unveiled in 1904.



Figures V-16, V-17: Recommendations for a neighborhood area and new monument at Garfield Square



*Victory Monument at King Dr. and 35th Street*



*George Washington Equestrian Statue*

### *Vietnam Veterans Marker and Flag Pole*

Dedicated to the veterans of the Vietnam Conflict, this marker and flag pole was erected in 1983 by the Gage Park Civic Association. The marker, which is a simple quarter of an ellipse made of polished black granite, is located on a traffic island at the intersection of Western and Garfield boulevards.

### *William McKinley Monument*

The William McKinley Monument, located in McKinley Park adjacent to Western Boulevard, is clearly visible from the boulevard right-of-way. The sculpture of our 24th President, designed by Charles Mulligan, was commissioned in 1905 by the South Park District. The raised semicircular plaza of the monument was designed by architects Hunt and Hunt.

### *Jacques Marquette Monument*

One of the most striking sculptures on the boulevard system is the Jacques Marquette Monument by Hermon Atkins MacNeil, located at the junction of 24th and Marshall boulevards. The bronze sculpture, which depicts Louis Joliet and Jacques Marquette with an Algonquin Indian, was commissioned by the B.F. Ferguson Fund and installed in 1926.

### *One Family One World*

This sculpture, which is the most contemporary addition to the boulevard system, was erected in 1971-72 on a raised plaza on the median of Douglas Boulevard at Kedzie Avenue. Sidney Murphy, the winner of a high school student design competition, cast his design in a masonry-like substance that has not worn well.

### *American Youth and Independence Day Fountain and Sculpture*

Charles Mulligan's festive bronze sculpture of two girls and two boys celebrating the Fourth of July sits atop a 15-foot granite pedestal, which is a part of a granite pool. The sculpture and fountain, which was commissioned by the West Park District and dedicated on Independence Day, 1902, is set on a slightly raised area in Independence Square at the junction of Independence and Douglas boulevards.

### *Illinois Centennial Column*

Dedicated in October of 1918, the Illinois Centennial Column commemorated 100 years of Illinois statehood. The large carved stone drum and a 50-foot, doric-style marble column crowned with a carved eagle rests on a broad stone platform on a rise in Logan Square at the convergence of Kedzie and Logan boulevards. Henry Bacon, the architect of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C., designed the Illinois Centennial Column, and Evelyn Beatrice Longman, the first woman elected a full member of the National Academy of Design, directed its construction. The monument was originally commissioned by the B.F. Ferguson Fund, and both the monument and square were restored in 1980.

### *Management and Maintenance*

Improved management and maintenance are critical components of the overall renovation of the boulevards.

Responsibility for the boulevards is fragmented and disbursed among public and private agencies. For the City of Chicago, six different departments play significant roles.

- The Department of Planning has overall land use planning responsibility for the City.
- The Department of Streets and Sanitation's Bureau of Street Operations and Beautification has primary responsibility for the boulevards and oversees the planting and trimming of trees and the maintenance of turf and flowers.

Its Bureau of Electricity installs, maintains and repairs street and pedestrian lights.

- The Department of Public Works' various bureaus have the following responsibilities:

The Bureau of Architecture has primary responsibility for designing and contracting landscape improvements.

The Bureau of Engineering has jurisdiction over the design, layout and construction of major arterial realignments and highway and bridge improvements as well as recommendations for the restoration of monuments.

The Bureau of Street Traffic Engineering and Operations reviews and approves median cuts and closings, roadway realignments and signalization improvements.



*Thomas G. Masaryk Monument at the Midway Plaisance*



*The Francis Drexel Monument was recently restored*



The Bureau of Construction Services implements capital improvements by undertaking their construction.

- The Department of Housing oversees and manages the various urban renewal areas that adjoin the boulevards and also provides incentives for the rehabilitation and development of housing in Chicago.
- Similarly, the Department of Economic Development is responsible for implementation activities in commercial districts along the boulevards and for attracting commercial/industrial development to the City.
- The Chicago Landmarks Commission reviews and approves

Chicago historic districts and structures as well as reviews proposed developments within historic districts for design compatibility.

Boulevard maintenance is further complicated by the need for the City to coordinate with other governments and organizations:

- The Chicago Park District owns and operates the seven regional parks linked by the boulevards as well as the Midway Plaisance and parts of Sacramento and Hamlin boulevards.

- The Chicago Transit Authority maintains transit stops and bus shelters along the boulevards.
- The Art Institute of Chicago through its administration of the B.F. Ferguson Fund is responsible for the repair of Ferguson funded monuments along the boulevards.

These agencies all strive to maintain their part of the boulevards. Given the nature of the system, it is logical that this number be involved since effective boulevard restoration and maintenance require all the specializations that these organizations represent. With this number of agencies, coordination is complicated and inefficiencies and ineffectiveness frequently result from the lack of coordination. However, some of the recent activities along the boulevards have been models of effective coordination.

The secrets to the success of these projects were twofold. First, all of the critical agencies were made part of the initial planning so they understood how the various work elements relate to each other. A clear lead agency or coordinating agency was designated for the various phases so that one agency was held accountable or responsible. Institutionalizing this type of structure can go a long way to assure that the entire system is not only restored but also is properly maintained.

A second aspect of improved management is appropriating sufficient funds with which to care for the boulevards. The sharpest decrease in funding has been felt in the forestry and landscape maintenance function. Over the years the budget for the city section in charge of boulevard maintenance has decreased from \$13 million in 1979 to \$9.6 million allocated for 1989. In part this has resulted from shrinking municipal dollars as federal assistance has been pulled out of America's cities. But it is also due in part to the fact that the significance of the boulevards has not been articulated effectively in the budgeting process. The type of coordinating body discussed earlier could help strengthen the role of boulevard maintenance in relationship to other services provided by the city and, consequently, help in the budgeting process.

The decrease in funding has been reflected in the increasingly deteriorated condition of the boulevard landscape. In some areas reduced city services have been supplemented by self help groups that have taken the initiative to maintain the boulevards in their neighborhoods. These efforts are to be applauded and expanded at the same time as the City reaffirms its commitment to the boulevards by funding them at an appropriate level.



*The American Youth and Independence Day Monument before cleaning and restoration*



Finally, budget and coordination problems are aggravated by the lack of any ongoing assessment program. Such a program would assess conditions of trees, turf and such basic infrastructure as curbs and sidewalks on an ongoing basis so that priorities could be set.

### *Recommendations*

- A Boulevard Review Commission should be created led by the Department of Planning and comprised of representatives from the Departments of Streets and Sanitation, Public Works, Economic Development and Housing, as well as the Commission on Chicago Landmarks, the Chicago



*One Family, One World Statue at Douglas Boulevard and Kedzie Avenue*



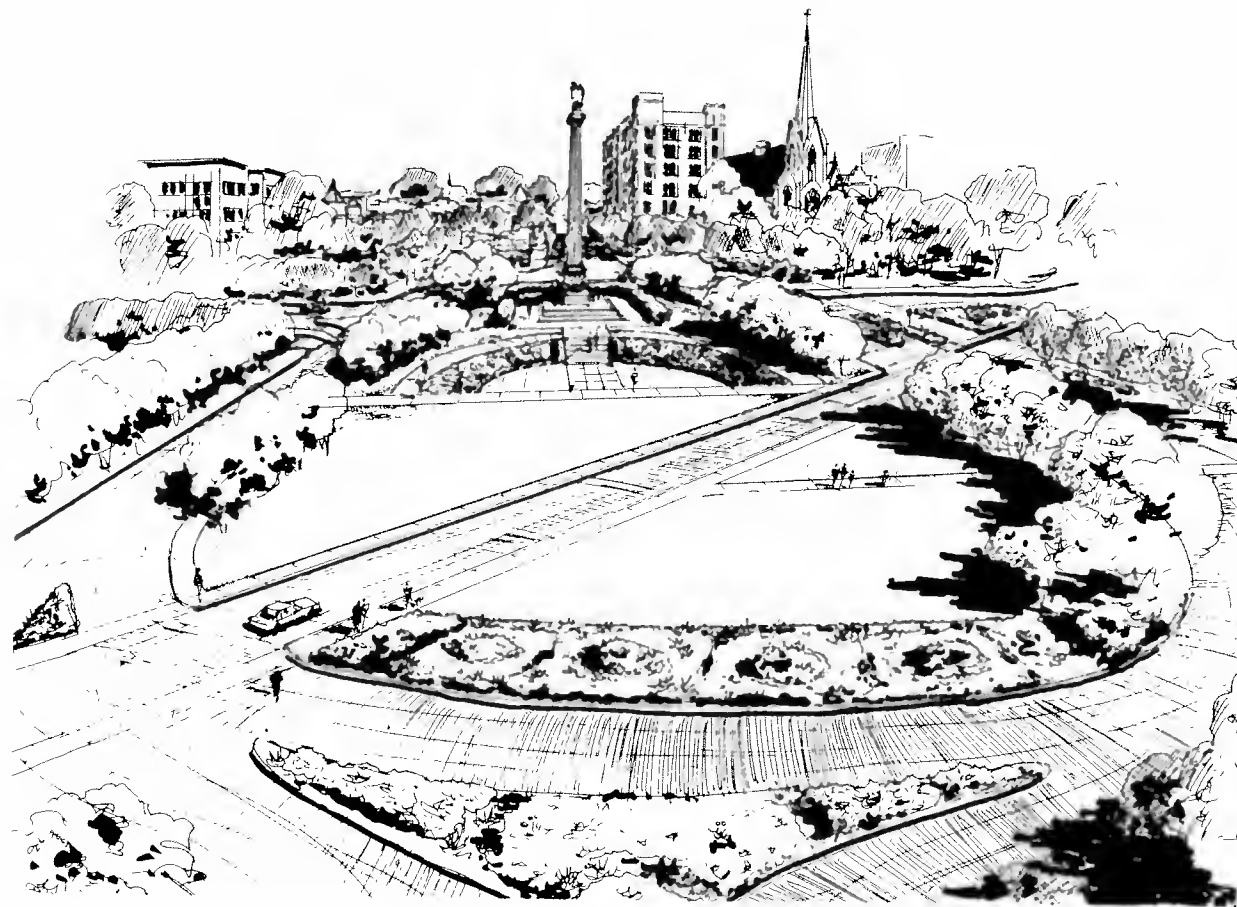
*The Fountain of Time at the Midway Plaisance and Washington Park*

Park District, the Chicago Transit Authority, and the Art Institute. This interagency commission will plan, coordinate and monitor projects carried out on the boulevards.

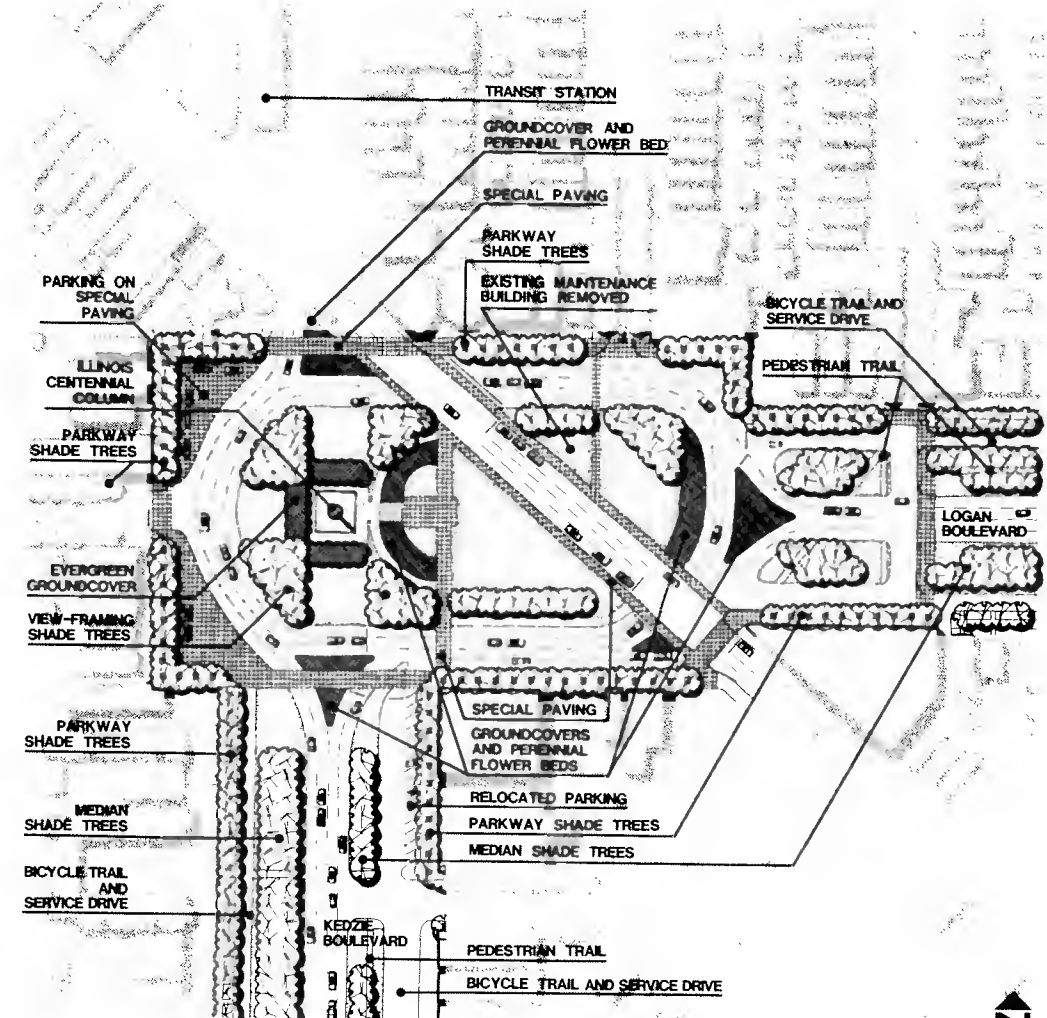
- Build maintenance and repair needs into the City budget based on a good needs assessment.
- Identify alternative funding sources to bolster existing boulevard restoration and maintenance budgets.
- Identify existing prime resources and elements of the boulevards to protect, maintain and evaluate those in need of immediate repair or restoration.

- Initiate immediate corrective measures for problems that threaten the health or condition of plants, monuments and site furnishings.
- Provide ongoing maintenance for all plants and turf with newly planted trees, shrubs, perennials and turf receiving a higher level of maintenance during the first few seasons.
- Survey and assess existing conditions along the boulevards. The Bureau of Street Operations and Beautification should create a data base containing all boulevard projects being undertaken by various City and private agencies, developers and neighborhood groups.

- Inventory and evaluate existing trees to ensure effective horticultural management. Update and routinely inspect their condition to identify minor problems before they become major ones.
- Design a substantial tree planting and maintenance program. A diverse palette of suitable ornamental trees is needed.
- Develop improved horticultural practices specifically geared to the boulevards. The Bureau of Street Operations and Beautification should regularly inspect every block of the system and provide proper pruning, fertilization, spraying,



*Rendering and design recommendations for Logan Square*



mulching, supplemental watering, as well as special care identified during routine inspections.

- Support maintenance practices with adequate manpower to implement any planned program. Plant and develop only as much of the boulevard system as can be realistically maintained through the combined efforts of volunteers and the Bureau of Street Operations and Beautification.
- Consider the continuing education of field personnel within the Bureau of Street Operations and Beautification a priority. Continue to use and develop current cooperative training efforts with the Illinois Department of Conservation, University of Illinois Extension Service and the Illinois Arborist Association.
- Encourage private involvement in the improvement and maintenance of the boulevards.



*Drexel Monument at Drexel and Hyde Park boulevards*



## Chapter VI     *Improving Life Along the Boulevards*



*Looking west on 24th Boulevard*

The preceding chapters of the comprehensive boulevard plan propose a framework for long range community development centered on the rejuvenation of the boulevards. The framework, as proposed, is predicated upon improved management and maintenance of the system, capital improvements and private and public community development investments. This concept plan must now be customized for each segment of the boulevard system through community based planning processes that take into account the specific needs of the residents and business people as well as community conditions for that portion of the system. These planning processes should result in detailed boulevard plans for each segment that document conditions and needs and guide future public and private investments.

### *Caring for the Boulevards*

Caring for the boulevards must be a public/private partnership. The City can begin to improve the overall management and maintenance of the boulevards by providing leadership among governmental agencies and increasing the budget appropriation for this purpose. Resources earmarked for the boulevards should include specific allocations to increase and maintain the number and variety of trees and shrubbery on the boulevards, as well as to provide for the maintenance and improvement of roads, lighting and amenities on them.

Furthermore, the City needs to encourage and support a stronger partnership with the citizens and businesses that have united to protect the boulevards in their neighborhoods. Community sponsored clean-up and fix-up days go a long way toward improving the appearance of the boulevards and should

be supported with the provision of additional trash receptacles and special garbage pick-up as well as other services whenever possible.

## Rejuvenating the Boulevards

Much has already been achieved to revitalize the boulevards and adjoining communities. In the last five years the City has already invested over \$14 million to bring new vitality to Chicago's boulevards.

In order to accomplish the boulevard restoration plan, other governmental and private matching funds should be actively sought. Capital improvements to the system represent the largest funding need. The Community Development Block Grant Program, Chicago's aggressive General Obligation Bond Programs, the federal government's Urban Parks and Recreation Recovery Program and the proposed Heritage Trust Fund should be used to finance these investments and should form the base from which other funds can be leveraged. Other fund sources include: Land and Water Conservation Grants, the Clean and Beautiful Program, the Build Illinois Program, Aid to Federal Highway Funds, State Highway Funds and Historic Preservation Funds. In addition, a host of other smaller government programs might be sources of project and site-specific implementation funds.

Public/private funding partnerships, such as the 50/50 Sidewalk Program, the B.F. Ferguson Fund, foundation grants and tree donations from arboretums should be used for portions of the restoration. Other means of funding projects or activities might be possible through the creation of a special taxing district or through Tax Increment Financing (TIF).

Needed capital improvements are organized by boulevard segment on the attached table. The capital improvements are organized into nine program areas related to the system:

- **Landscaping**—reforestation and planting needs, reforming of the medians, sod and turf improvements, and median crosswalk improvements.
- **Boulevard Amenities**—those pedestrian needs along the system for improved benches, pedestrian lighting, drinking fountains, waste receptacles and a systemwide pathway.
- **Monument Restoration**—costs involved in repairing, restoring and cleaning the existing monuments along the system.

- **Recreational Development**—creation of open field areas to be located along the boulevard system in areas lacking in active play fields.
- **Roadway Resurfacing**—existing needs to resurface the side drives along the system and the foreseeable needs for center drive resurfacing in select areas.
- **Roadway Realignment**—realignment of the boulevard system at select points.

- **Sidewalks, Curbs and Gutters**—an ongoing program intended to repair and replace curbs and gutters as needed.
- **Bridge Cleaning and Repair**—a constant program that includes cleaning and simple repairs and lighting to the overhead structures along the system. The category does not include single case large investments that might be coming up for improvements, such as the Western Avenue and Boulevard viaduct.

Table VI-1 Capital Improvements for the Boulevards

Boulevard Segment	Landscaping	Boulevard Amenities	Monument Restoration	Recreational Development	Roadway Resurfacing	Roadway Realignment	Sidewalks, Curbs, Gutters	Bridge Cleaning and Repair	Signage
Oakwood	•			•	•		•		•
Drexel	•	•							
Drexel Square	•	•							
Midway	•		•						
King Drive	•		•		•				•
Garfield		•	•			•	•	•	•
Western	•	•			•	•			•
31st Street	•	•		•	•		•	•	
California	•	•					•		
24th Street	•		•						
Marshall	•	•						•	
Douglas	•	•	•			•			•
Independence Square	•	•		•					
Independence	•	•					•		
Hamlin	•				•		•		•
Central Park	•				•	•	•	•	
Garfield Square	•	•		•			•		
Franklin	•	•			•	•			
Sacramento Square	•				•		•		
Sacramento	•	•			•		•	•	
Humboldt	•	•			•		•	•	•
Palmer Square	•	•		•			•		
Kedzie	•	•			•		•		
Logan Square	•			•					
Logan	•	•			•		•		•
Diversey	•			•					





*Some monuments need cleaning and restoration*

- **Signage**—a program of redesigning and installing new signs systemwide.

Community representatives need to review the list of public improvements along their segment of the boulevards. As part of a neighborhood planning process it will be necessary to identify those improvements most crucial to stimulating development in the areas adjacent to the boulevard. Implementation of these projects should then be phased according to the community's stated development priorities.



*Seating areas need improvements*

## *Rebuilding the Neighborhoods*

While the City can begin to move immediately on improving the overall management and maintenance of the boulevards, the identification and prioritization of capital improvements and community investments can only be spelled out at the neighborhood level. Community organizations, residents and business people need to establish a vision for the future development of their community and to prioritize and implement capital improvements and community projects most likely to improve the appearance and quality of life in their neighborhood as well as to generate additional spinoff investments.

This comprehensive boulevard plan represents a framework within which improvements to the boulevard system should be undertaken. Before improvements can actually be made to any particular section of the boulevard, neighborhood planning processes to design and prioritize the improvements need to be initiated. These planning processes will produce detailed neighborhood plans consistent with the comprehensive boulevard plan.

Strategies and actions for financing and implementing these improvements must then be outlined and acted upon. For example, groups should work with their elected and government officials to access and target community development and

general obligation bond funds to priority boulevard projects. Additionally, they should work with local and citywide development corporations to design and implement residential, commercial and industrial loan programs for the same purpose. Finally, they should actively solicit funds from private foundations and philanthropic organizations as well as through fundraising efforts such as boulevard events, tours, dinners and awards programs.

## *Recommendations*

- Fund the maintenance and management of the boulevard system at an appropriate level.
- Build boulevard restoration into the capital improvements program and future general obligation bond issues as a basic program to be implemented as funds become available.
- Secure other public and private funding to implement components of the capital improvements needed along the boulevards.
- Renovate only as much of the boulevards as can be maintained.
- Prioritize the boulevard segments to be improved based on the potential for stimulating private/other public investment along the same stretch of boulevard and active community participation in the planning and improvement of the boulevards.
- Prioritize public improvements needed to support continued growth along the boulevards.



*The boulevards contribute open green spaces to our neighborhoods*

# Acknowledgements

The publication of *Life Along The Boulevards: Using Chicago's Historic Boulevards as a Catalyst for Neighborhood Revitalization* marks a significant moment in the life of the system. For the first time, historical, demographic and planning data have been compiled into a comprehensive study and recommendations for the overall management and revitalization of the system have been developed. While it would be impossible to individually thank each community resident, public official, organization and advisor who contributed to this plan, we gratefully acknowledge those listed below and those whose names are not mentioned.

## Participant Departments and Agencies

### Chicago Commission on Landmarks

William McLenahan, Director  
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Bess Donaldson, Commissioner  
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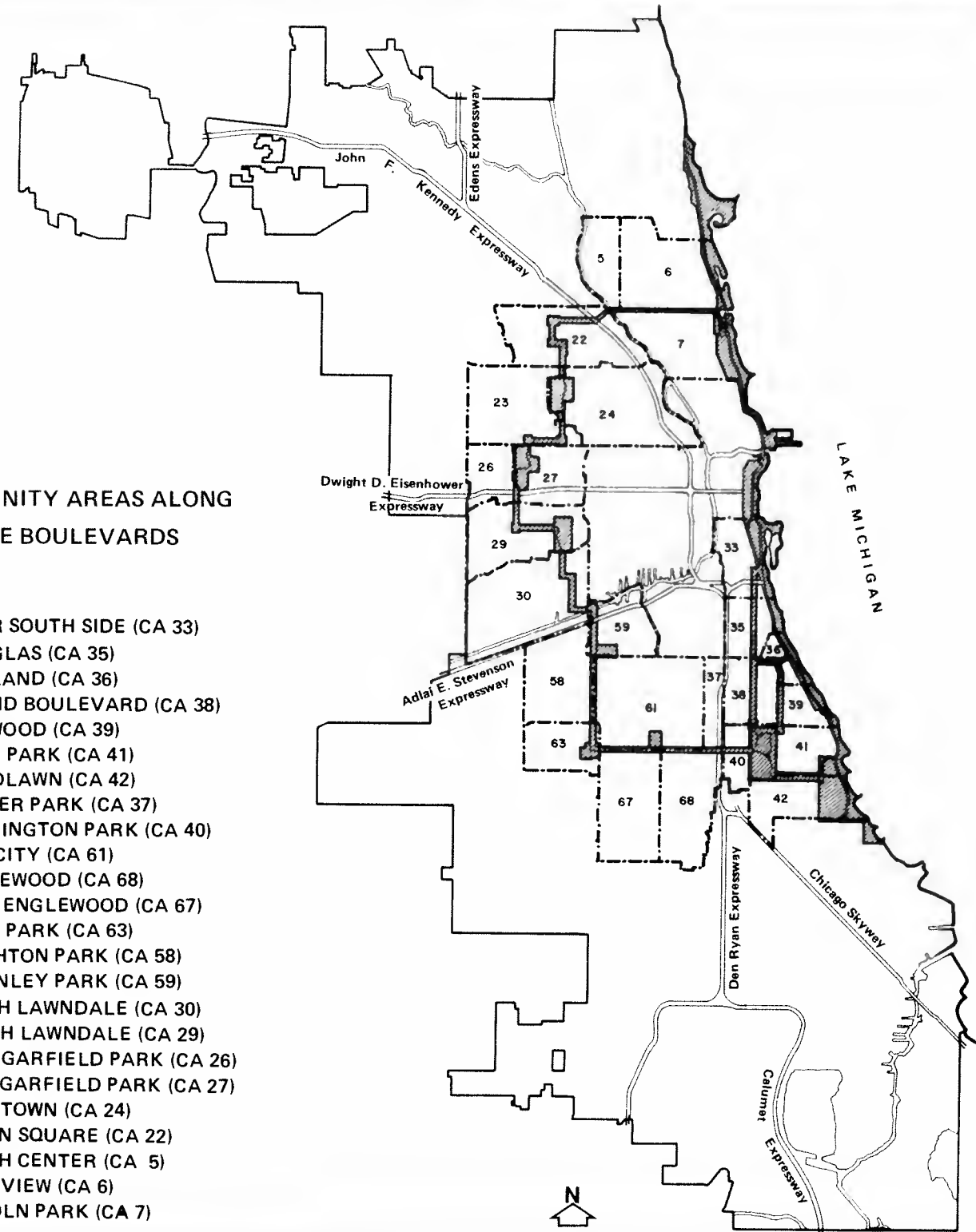
## *Appendix*

### Boulevard Designs and Development Concepts

The following are segment-specific maps for the 21 boulevards in the system. They document boulevard location, layout and landscape; they also identify recent public investments, contributing historical structures, monuments, and opportunities for rehabilitation and neighborhood development along the boulevards.

# COMMUNITY AREAS ALONG THE BOULEVARDS

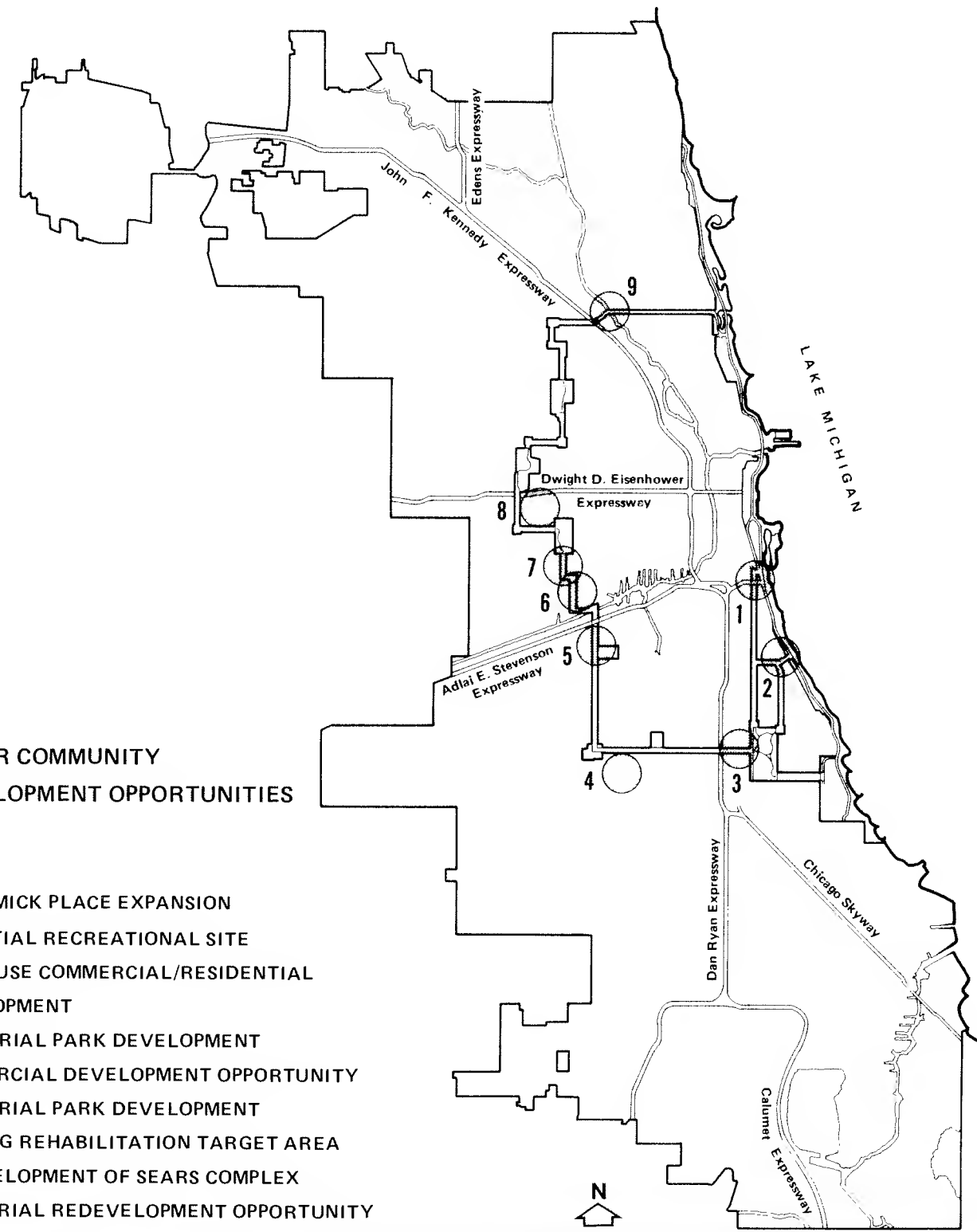
NEAR SOUTH SIDE (CA 33)  
DOUGLAS (CA 35)  
OAKLAND (CA 36)  
GRAND BOULEVARD (CA 38)  
KENWOOD (CA 39)  
HYDE PARK (CA 41)  
WOODLAWN (CA 42)  
FULLER PARK (CA 37)  
WASHINGTON PARK (CA 40)  
NEW CITY (CA 61)  
ENGLEWOOD (CA 68)  
WEST ENGLEWOOD (CA 67)  
GAGE PARK (CA 63)  
BRIGHTON PARK (CA 58)  
McKINLEY PARK (CA 59)  
SOUTH LAWDALE (CA 30)  
NORTH LAWDALE (CA 29)  
WEST GARFIELD PARK (CA 26)  
EAST GARFIELD PARK (CA 27)  
WEST TOWN (CA 24)  
LOGAN SQUARE (CA 22)  
NORTH CENTER (CA 5)  
LAKE VIEW (CA 6)  
LINCOLN PARK (CA 7)








# MAJOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITIES

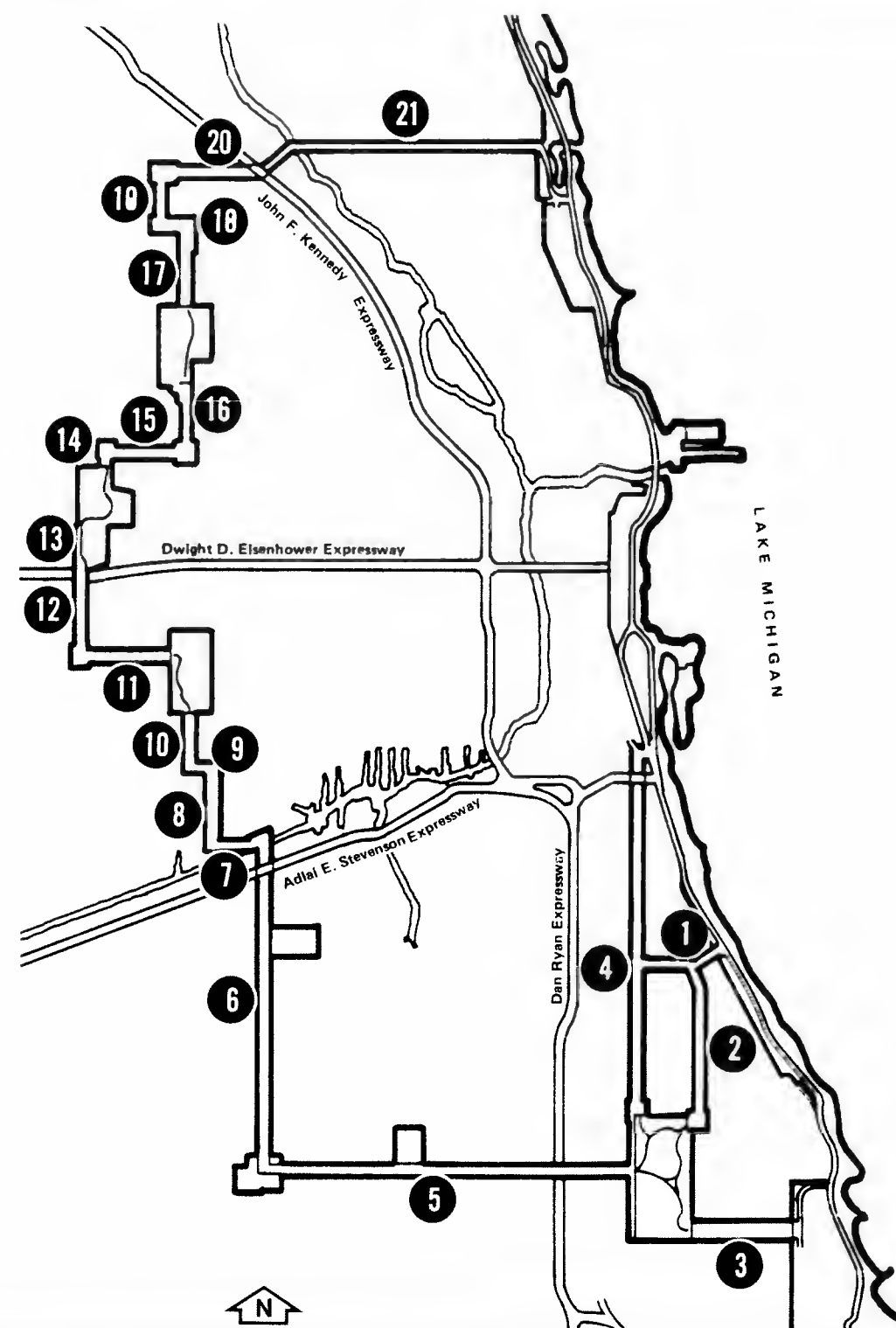
1. McCORMICK PLACE EXPANSION
2. POTENTIAL RECREATIONAL SITE
3. MIXED USE COMMERCIAL/RESIDENTIAL  
DEVELOPMENT
4. INDUSTRIAL PARK DEVELOPMENT
5. COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY
6. INDUSTRIAL PARK DEVELOPMENT
7. HOUSING REHABILITATION TARGET AREA
8. REDEVELOPMENT OF SEARS COMPLEX
9. INDUSTRIAL REDEVELOPMENT OPPORTUNITY



1. OAKWOOD BOULEVARD
2. DREXEL BOULEVARD
3. MIDWAY PLAISANCE
4. KING DRIVE
5. GARFIELD BOULEVARD
6. WESTERN BOULEVARD
7. 31st BOULEVARD
8. CALIFORNIA BOULEVARD
9. 24th BOULEVARD
10. MARSHALL BOULEVARD
11. DOUGLAS BOULEVARD
12. INDEPENDENCE BOULEVARD
13. HAMLIN BOULEVARD
14. CENTRAL PARK BOULEVARD
15. FRANKLIN BOULEVARD
16. SACRAMENTO BOULEVARD
17. HUMBOLDT BOULEVARD
18. PALMER SQUARE
19. KEDZIE BOULEVARD
20. LOGAN BOULEVARD
21. DIVERSEY PARKWAY

#### LEGEND

-  Existing conditions
-  Proposed landscape plan
-  Architecturally / historically significant structures and structures that contribute to the historic character of the area.

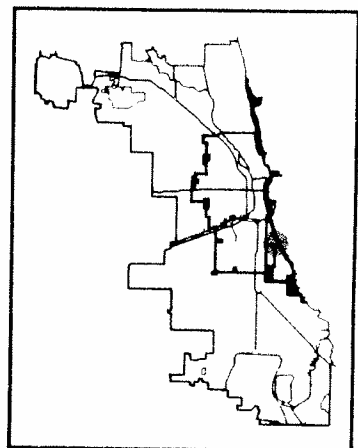


OAKWOOD BOULEVARD RESTORATION PLAN

- Formal planting along parkway.
- Landscape Oakwood/Drexel boulevards intersection.
- Pedestrian trail along sidewalk.
- Bicycle trail along street.

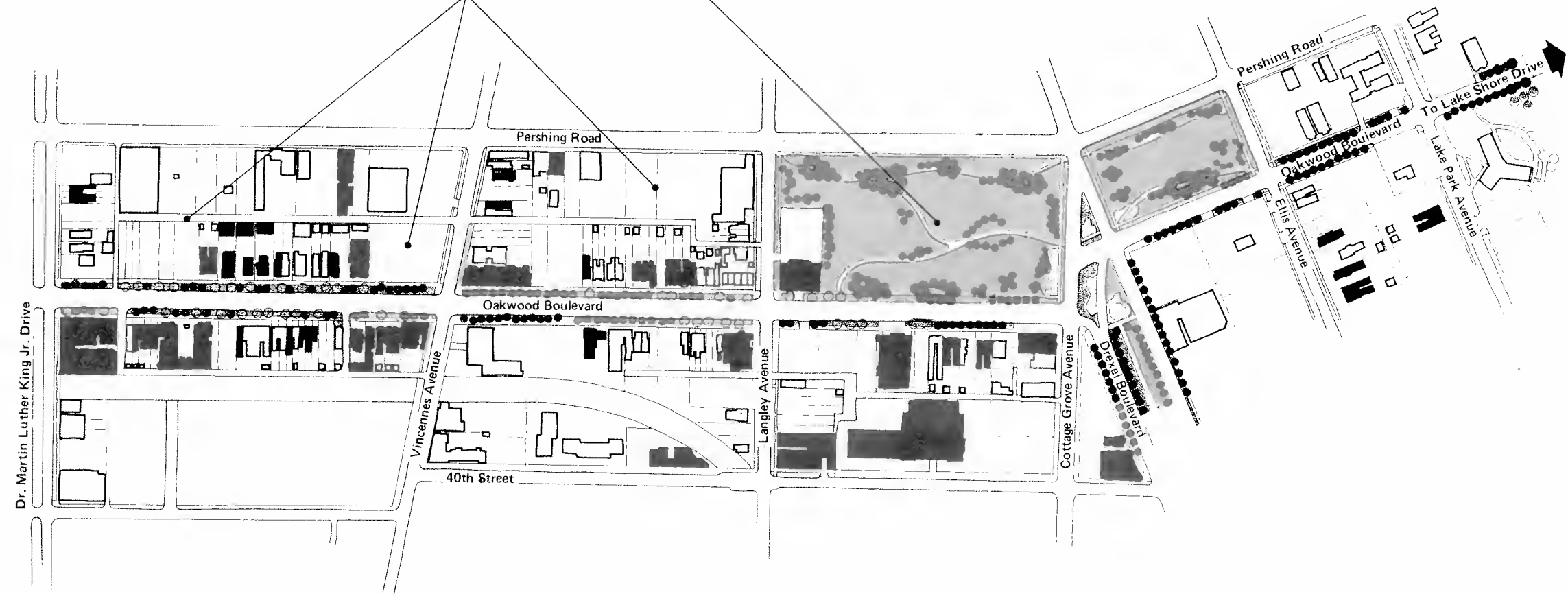
Recent Improvements  
(1983-1988)

- Viaduct Improvements  
1090-1100 E. Oakwood Blvd. \$ 2,000,000
- Water Distribution  
570-699 E. Oakwood Blvd. \$ 79,000



Create park at Oakwood and Drexel boulevards with parklike planting and open recreational spaces on city-owned urban renewal land.

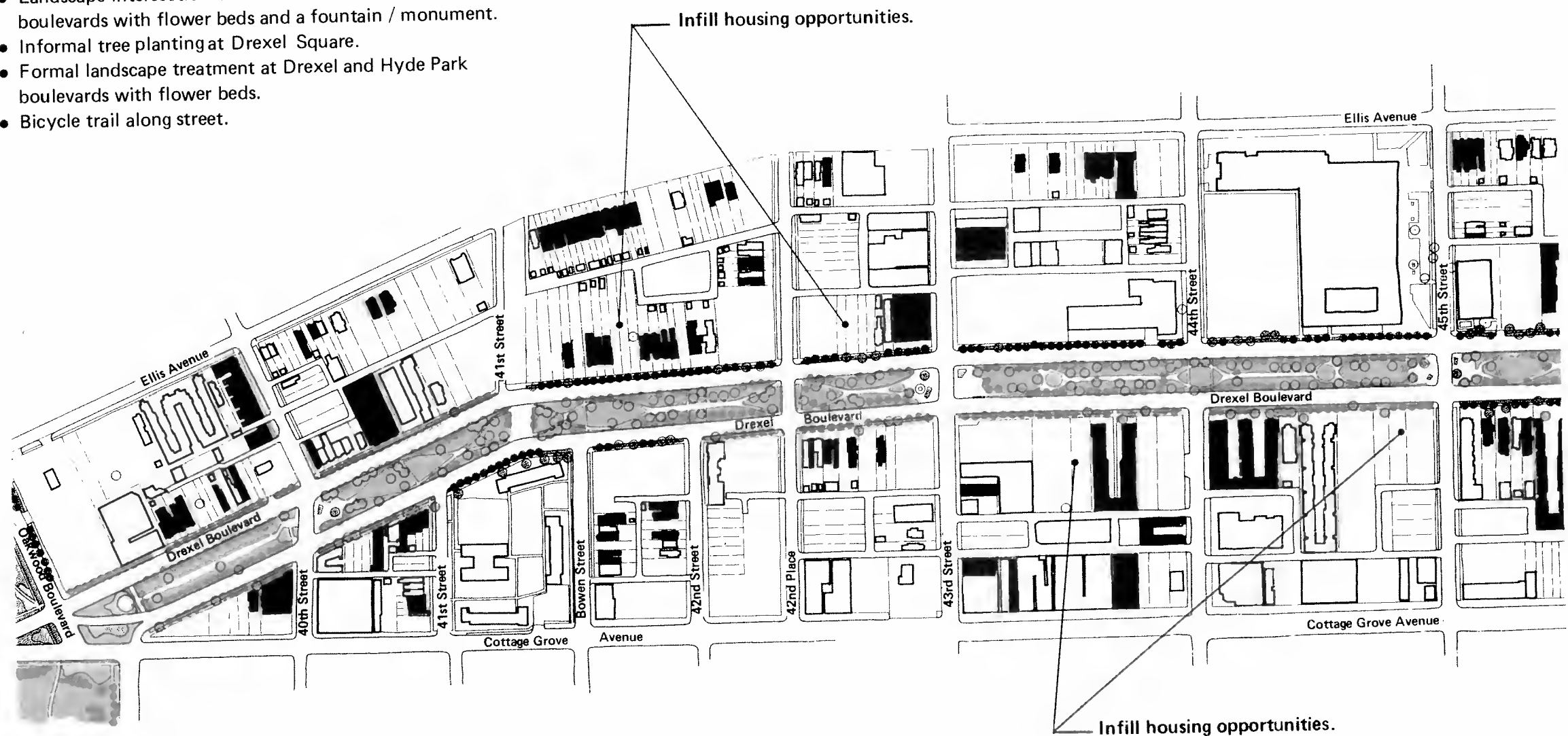
Infill housing opportunities



Oakwood Boulevard

## DREXEL BOULEVARD RESTORATION PLAN

- Formal planting in median and parkways.
- Repair pedestrian walkways and plazas.
- Flower beds at specific points along the median.
- Landscape intersection of Drexel and Oakwood boulevards with flower beds and a fountain / monument.
- Informal tree planting at Drexel Square.
- Formal landscape treatment at Drexel and Hyde Park boulevards with flower beds.
- Bicycle trail along street.

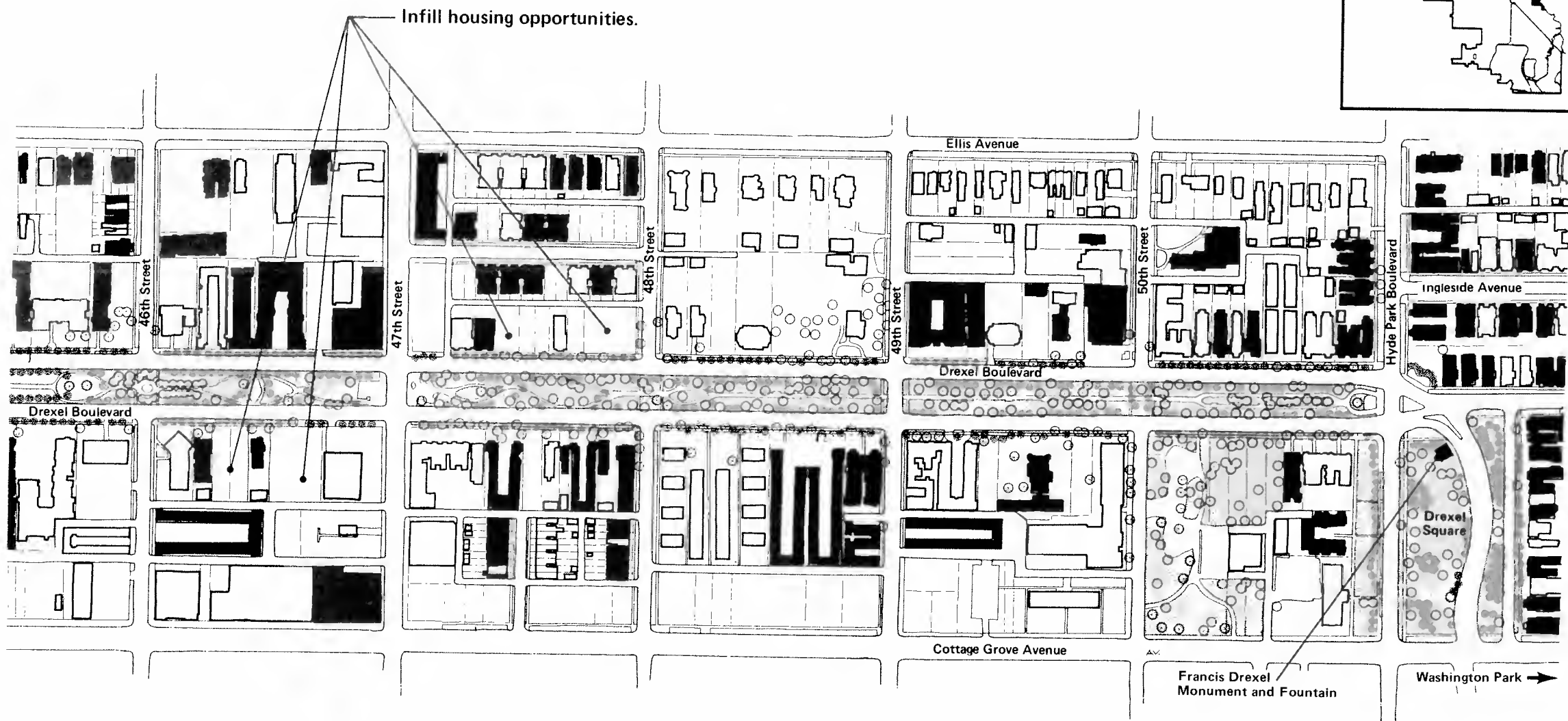


# Drexel Boulevard



Recent Improvements  
(1983-1988)

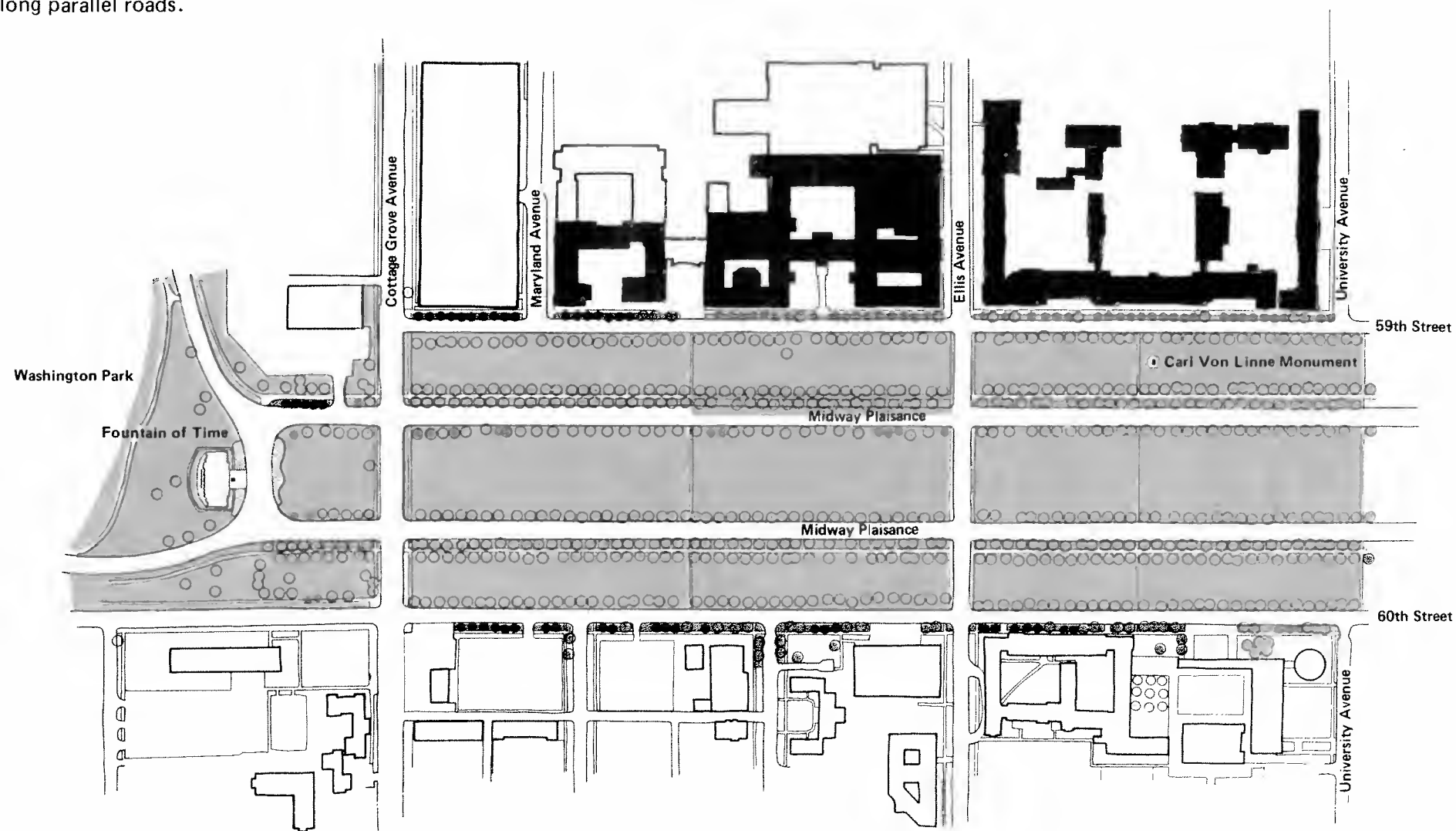
- Rehabilitation of 20 dwelling units at 50th St. and Drexel Blvd. \$ 1,100,000
- Restoration of Francis Drexel monument at Hyde Park Blvd. and Drexel Blvd. \$ 10,000





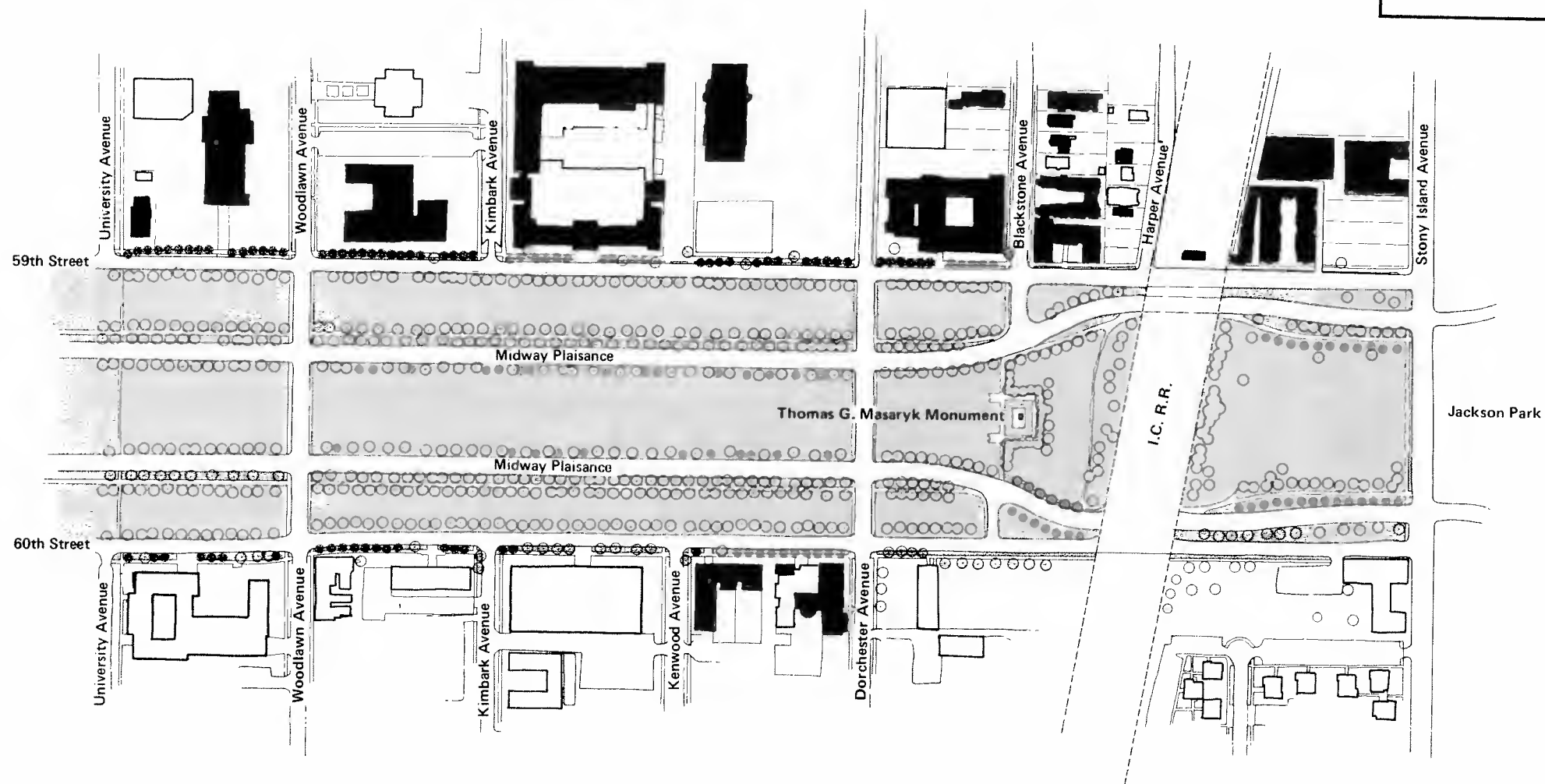
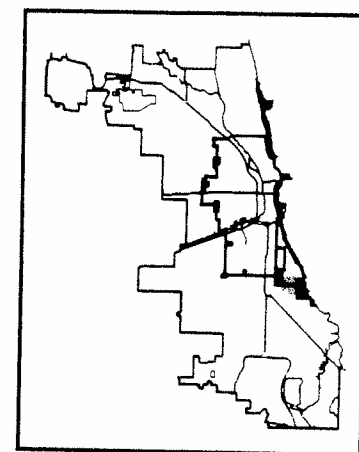
## MIDWAY PLAISANCE BOULEVARD RESTORATION PLAN

- Formal tree planting along medians and parkways.
- Continue maintenance of green areas.
- Flower beds at the entrance of Washington Park.
- Repair base and stairs of the Masaryk monument.
- Pedestrian trail along medians.
- Bicycle trail along parallel roads.



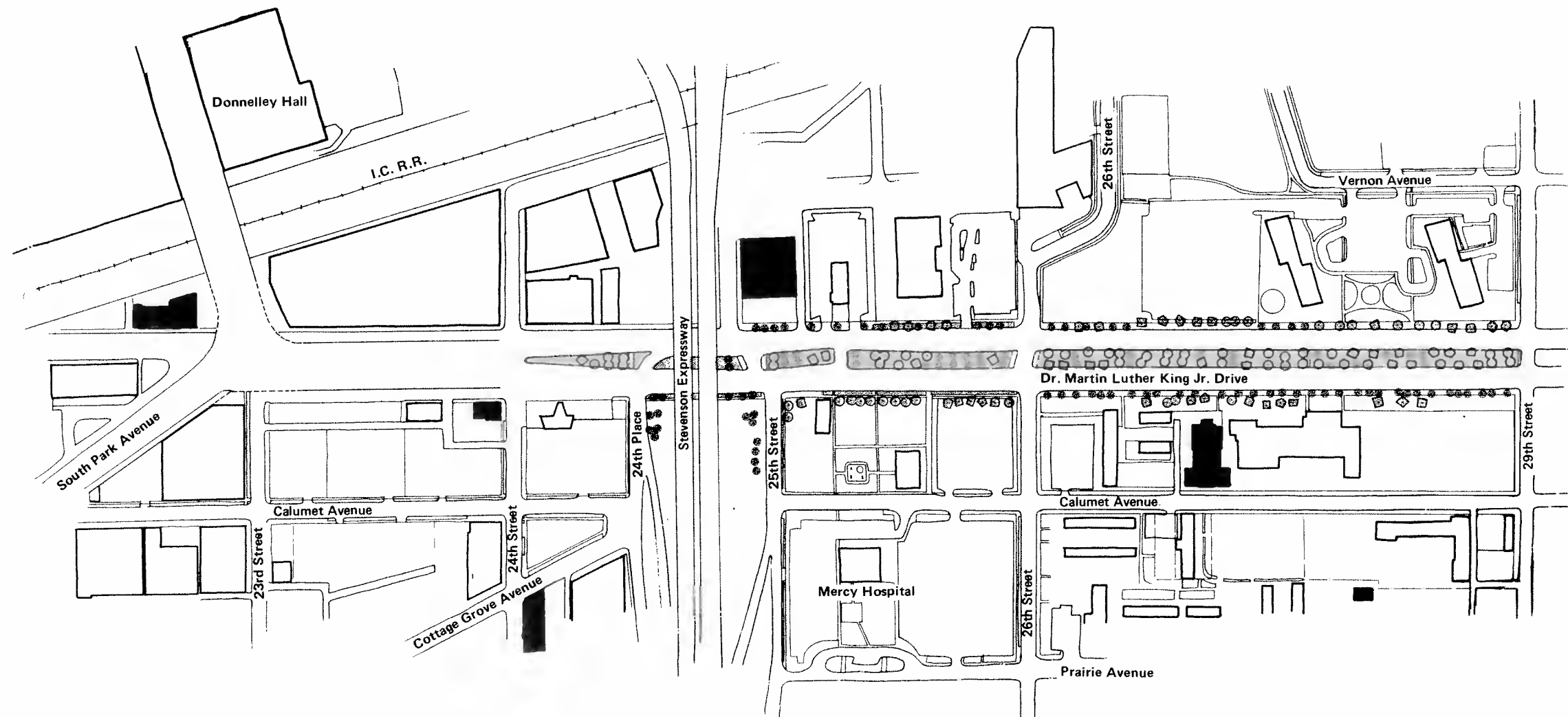
# Midway Plaisance





## KING DRIVE RESTORATION PLAN

- Formal tree planting on median and parkways.
- Pedestrian trail on sidewalk.
- Bicycle trail along street.
- Create a buffer between King Drive and the rears of residential structures between 31st and 35th streets by planting parkway trees.

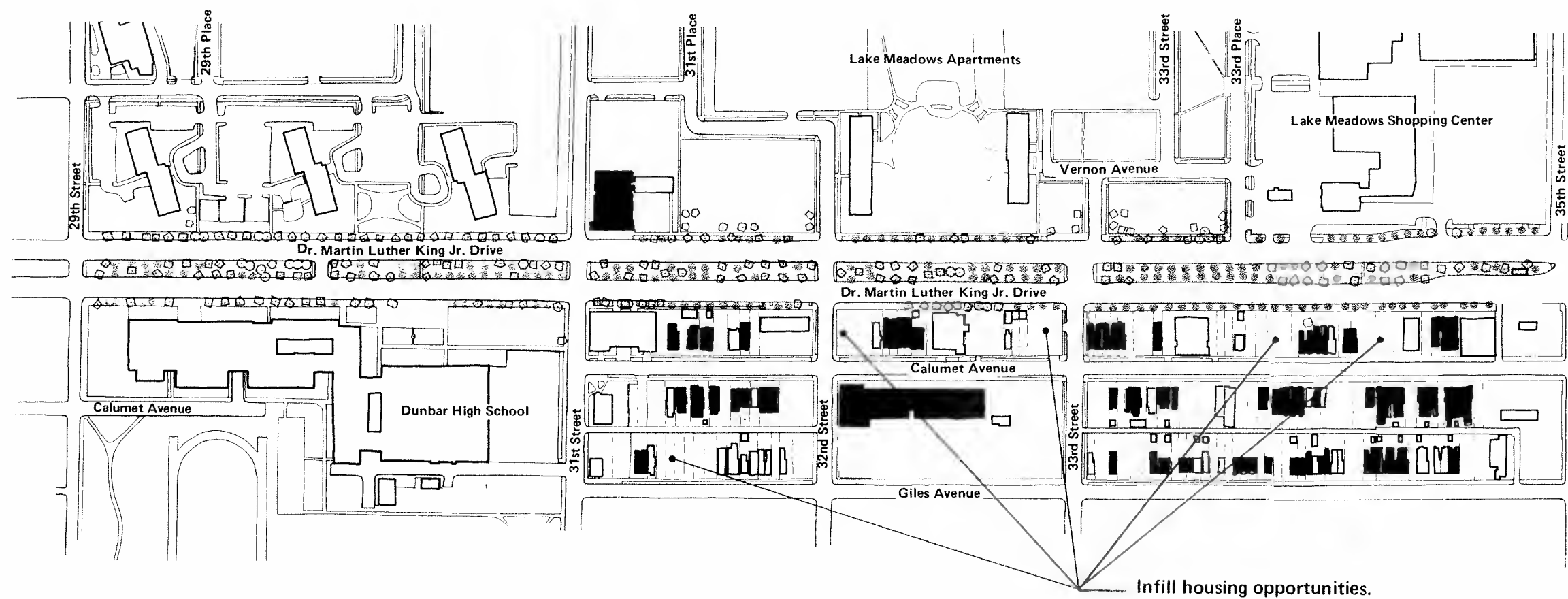
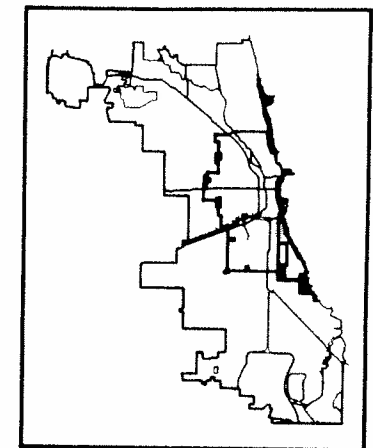


# King Drive



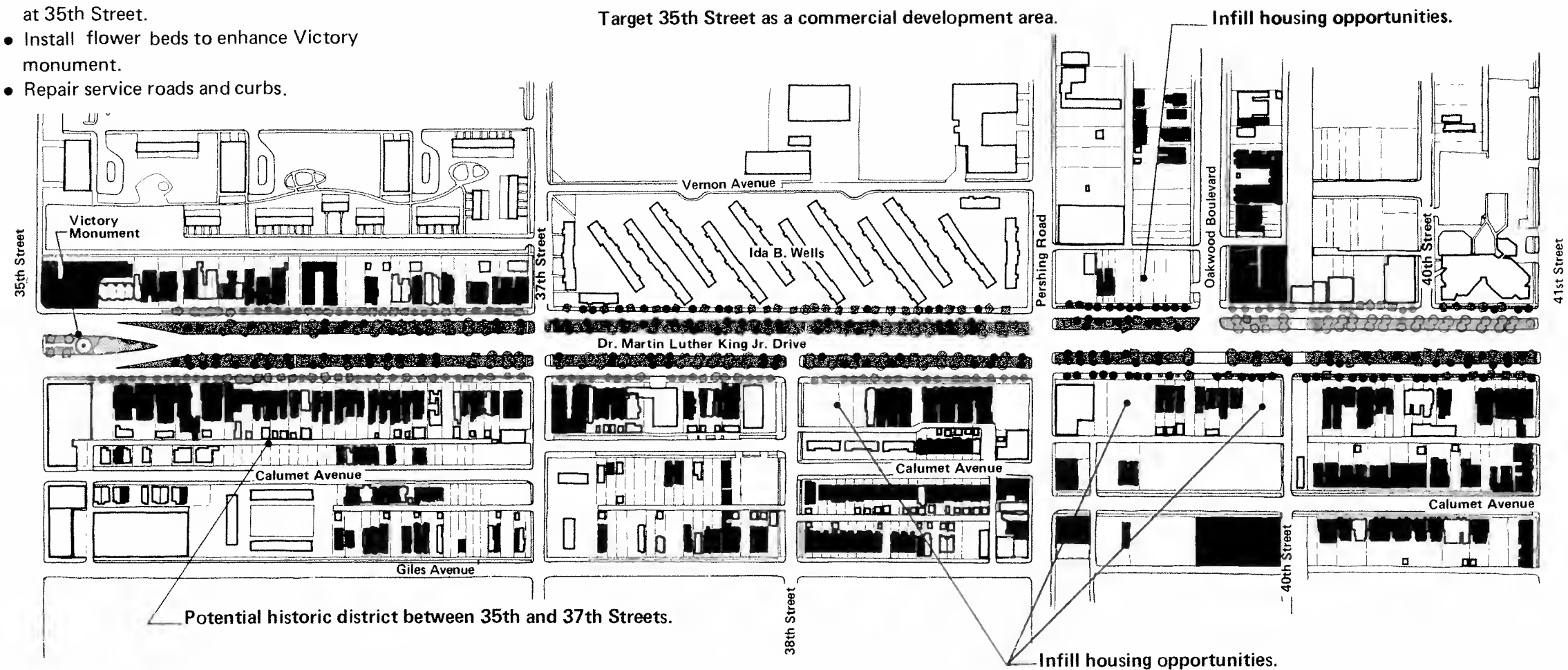
Recent Improvements  
(1983-1988)

- Boulevard Restoration \$ 400,000  
3100-4300 S. King Dr.



## KING DRIVE RESTORATION PLAN

- Reestablish the historic formal planting of six lines of trees.
- Proposed location for monument to Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (47th / King Drive).
- Bicycle trail along service roads.
- Pedestrian trail along sidewalk.
- Clean and maintain Victory monument at 35th Street.
- Install flower beds to enhance Victory monument.
- Repair service roads and curbs.



# King Drive

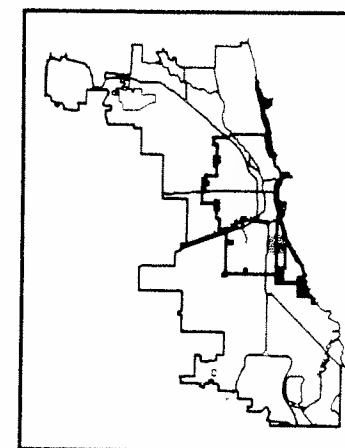




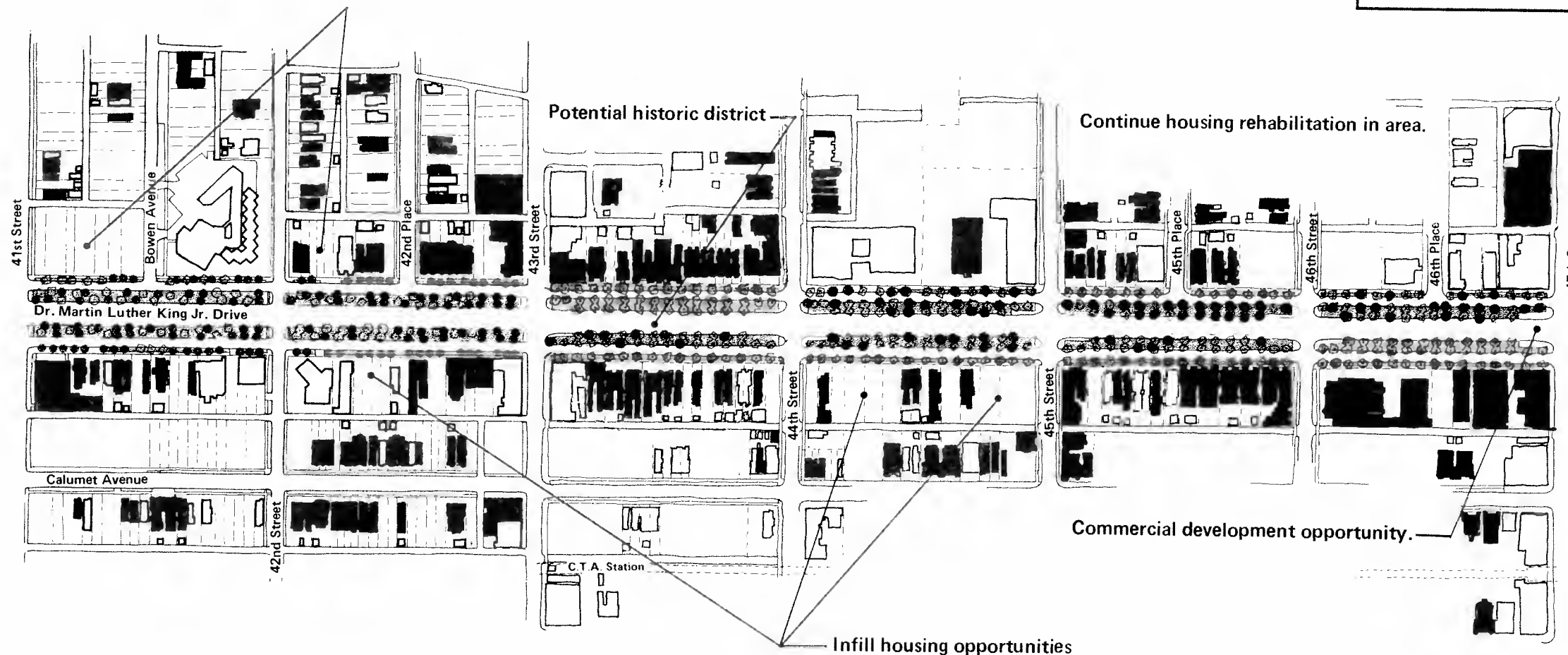
Recent Improvements  
(1983-1988)

- Business Area Streetscape  
35th St. from King Dr. to Michigan Ave. \$ 485,000
- Boulevard Restoration  
3100-4300 S. King Dr.  
4300-5500 S. King Dr. \$ 800,000
- Paul G. Stewart Apartments  
(187 units of elderly and family housing)  
41st. St. and King Dr. \$ 1,078,314

- Traffic Signal Improvement  
4500 S. King Dr. \$ 263,000
- Model Blocks  
3700-3799 S. King Dr.  
4530-4699 S. King Dr. \$ 80,000
- Arterial Street Resurfacing  
4300-5100 S. King Dr. \$ 44,000
- Water Distribution  
4274-4299 S. King Dr. \$ 124,000
- Residential Street Resurfacing  
4300-5098 S. King Dr. \$ 266,000



Infill housing opportunities.

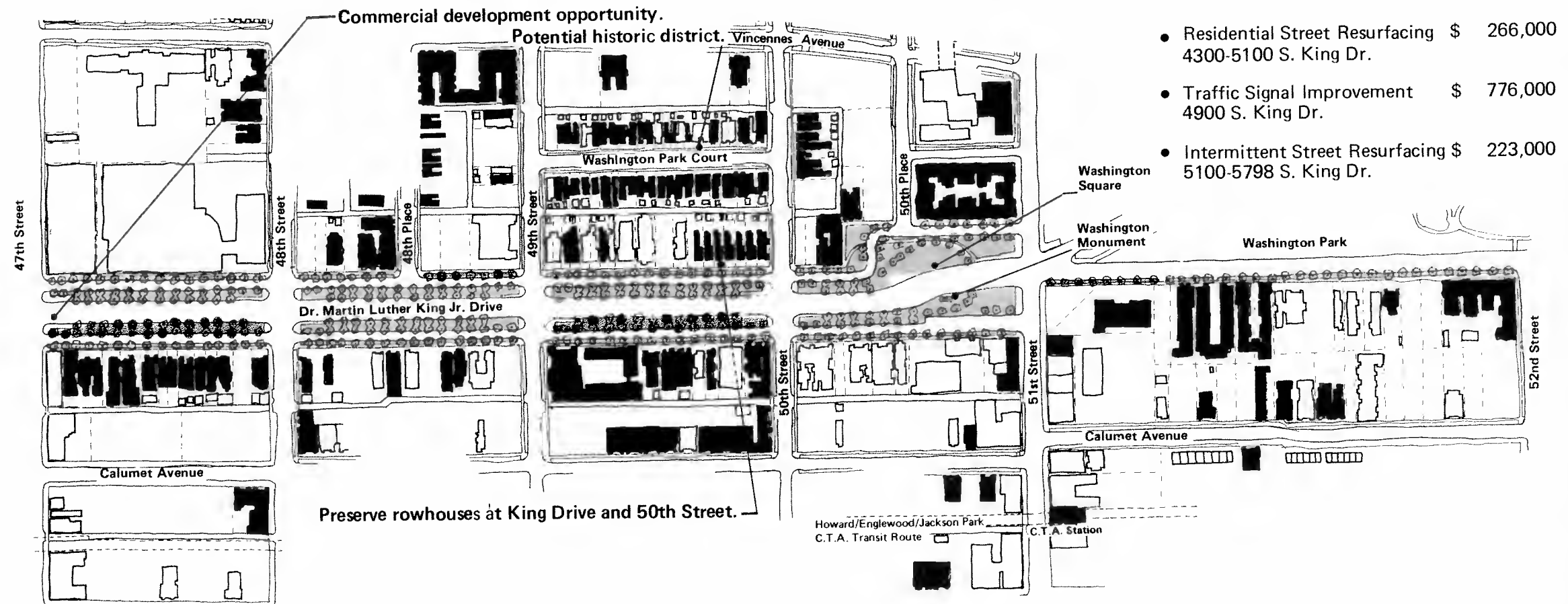
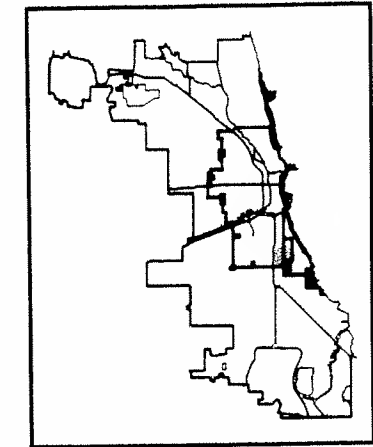


## KING DRIVE RESTORATION PLAN

- Reestablish the historic formal planting of six lines of trees.
- Pedestrian trail along sidewalk.
- Bicycle trail along service roads.
- Curvilinear planting pattern at 50th Place around the Washington Monument to create a terminus at the park and a backdrop to the statue.

### Recent Improvements (1983-1988)

- Boulevard Restoration \$ 400,000  
4300-5100 S. King Dr.
- North Washington Park Manor \$ 2,980,311  
(57 elderly housing units)  
51st St. and Vincennes Ave.
- Model Blocks \$ 160,000  
4700-5098 S. King Dr.  
5200-5398 S. King Dr.
- Arterial Street Resurfacing \$ 44,000  
4300-5100 S. King Dr.



# King Drive

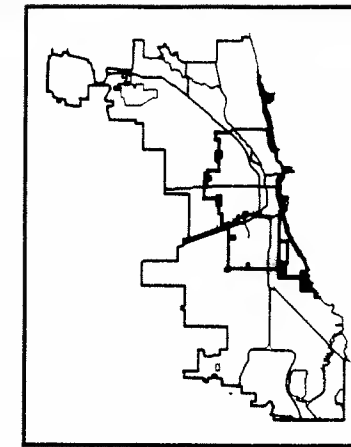


## GARFIELD BOULEVARD RESTORATION PLAN

- Informal tree planting.
- Continue pedestrian pathway on median.
- Repair sidewalks, gutters, and curbs.
- Bicycle trail on roadway.
- New circular pathway at the Garfield CTA station on the Howard / Englewood line.

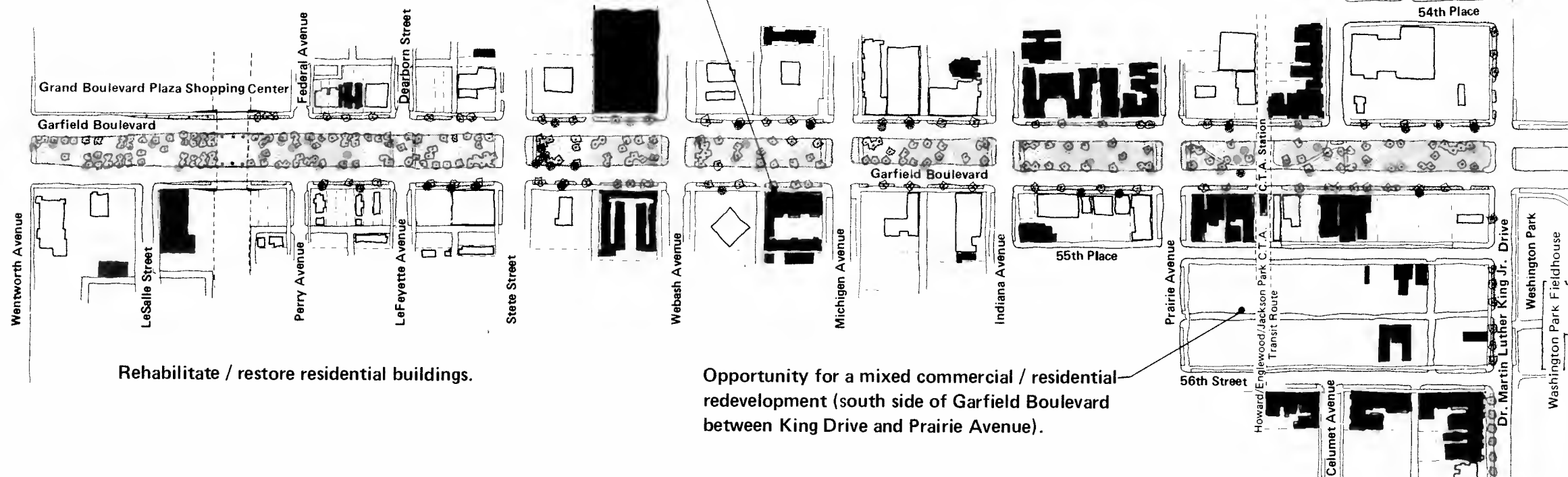
### Recent Improvements (1983-1988)

- |   |              |
|---|--------------|
| • Grand Boulevard Shopping Center<br>Garfield Blvd. and Dan Ryan Expressway                 | \$ 1,255,000 |
| • Good Shepherd Homes<br>(60 elderly housing units)<br>South Wabash Ave. and Garfield Blvd. | \$ 270,000   |
| • Boulevard Restoration<br>400 E. to 2400 W. Garfield Blvd.                                 | \$ 350,000   |
| • Intermittent Street Resurfacing<br>5100-5798 S. King Dr.                                  | \$ 223,000   |
| • Intersection Improvements<br>5500 S. King Dr.   | \$ 640,000   |



Potential for landmark designation (Mulvey Apartments).

Potential commercial / residential redevelopment site  
(King Drive / 54th Street).



Rehabilitate / restore residential buildings.

Opportunity for a mixed commercial / residential  
redevelopment (south side of Garfield Boulevard  
between King Drive and Prairie Avenue).

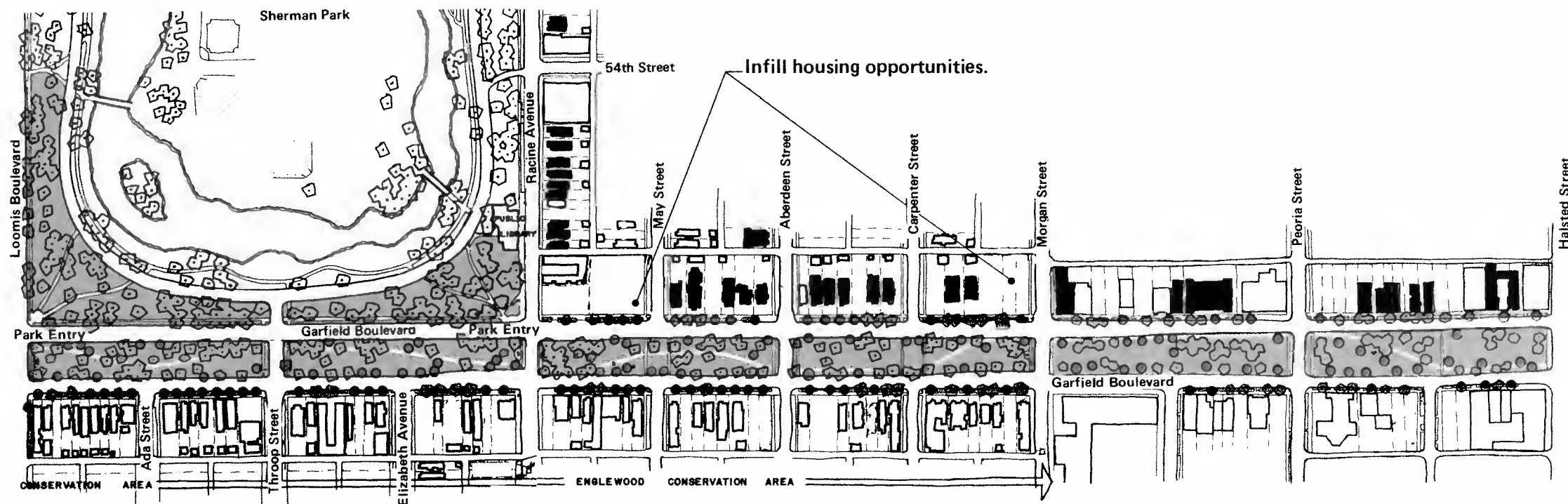


# Garfield Boulevard

## GARFIELD BOULEVARD RESTORATION PLAN

- Informal tree planting on medians and parkways.
- Pedestrian trail along median.
- Bicycle trail on street.
- Resod and regrade medians.

Repair and maintenance of existing housing stock as indicated in the Englewood Conservation Area plan.

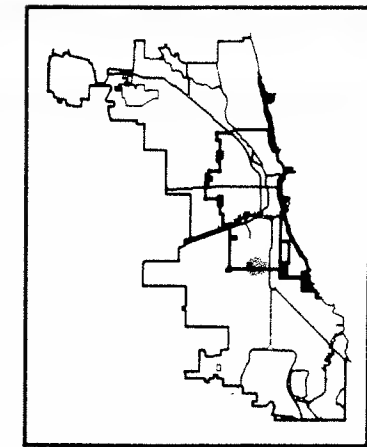


# Garfield Boulevard

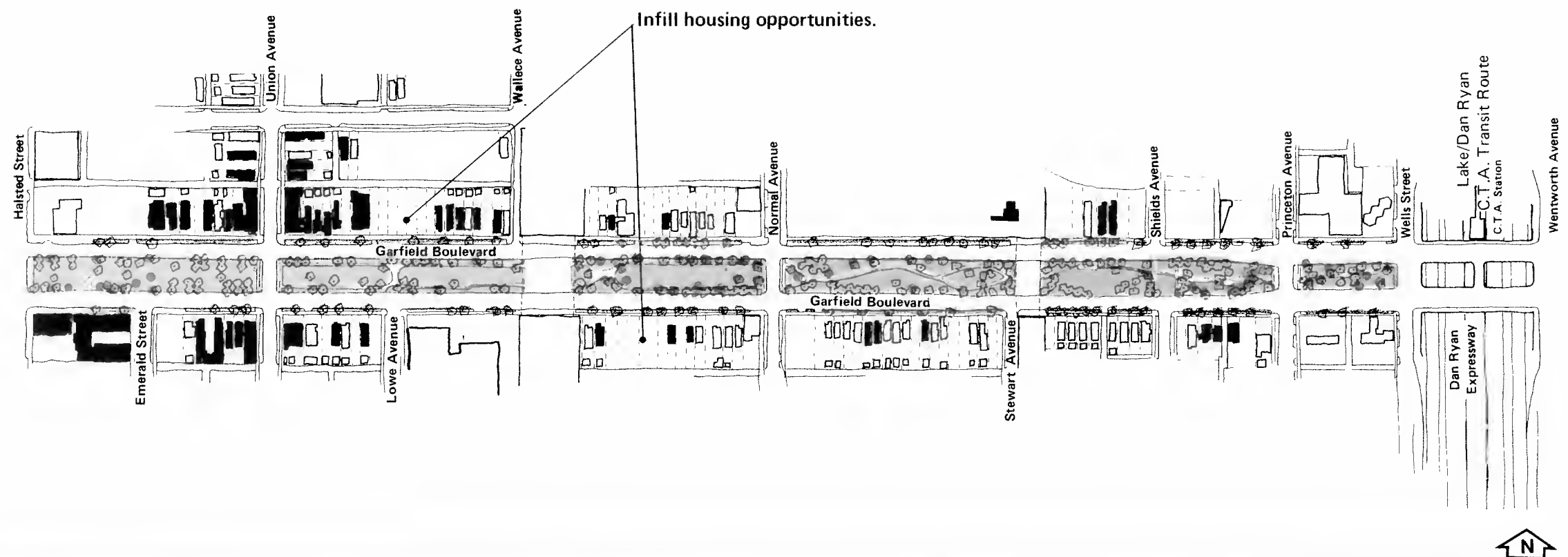


Recent Improvements  
(1983-1988)

- Boulevard Restoration \$ 350,000  
400 E. to 2400 W. Garfield Blvd.



Rehabilitate and restore residential buildings.

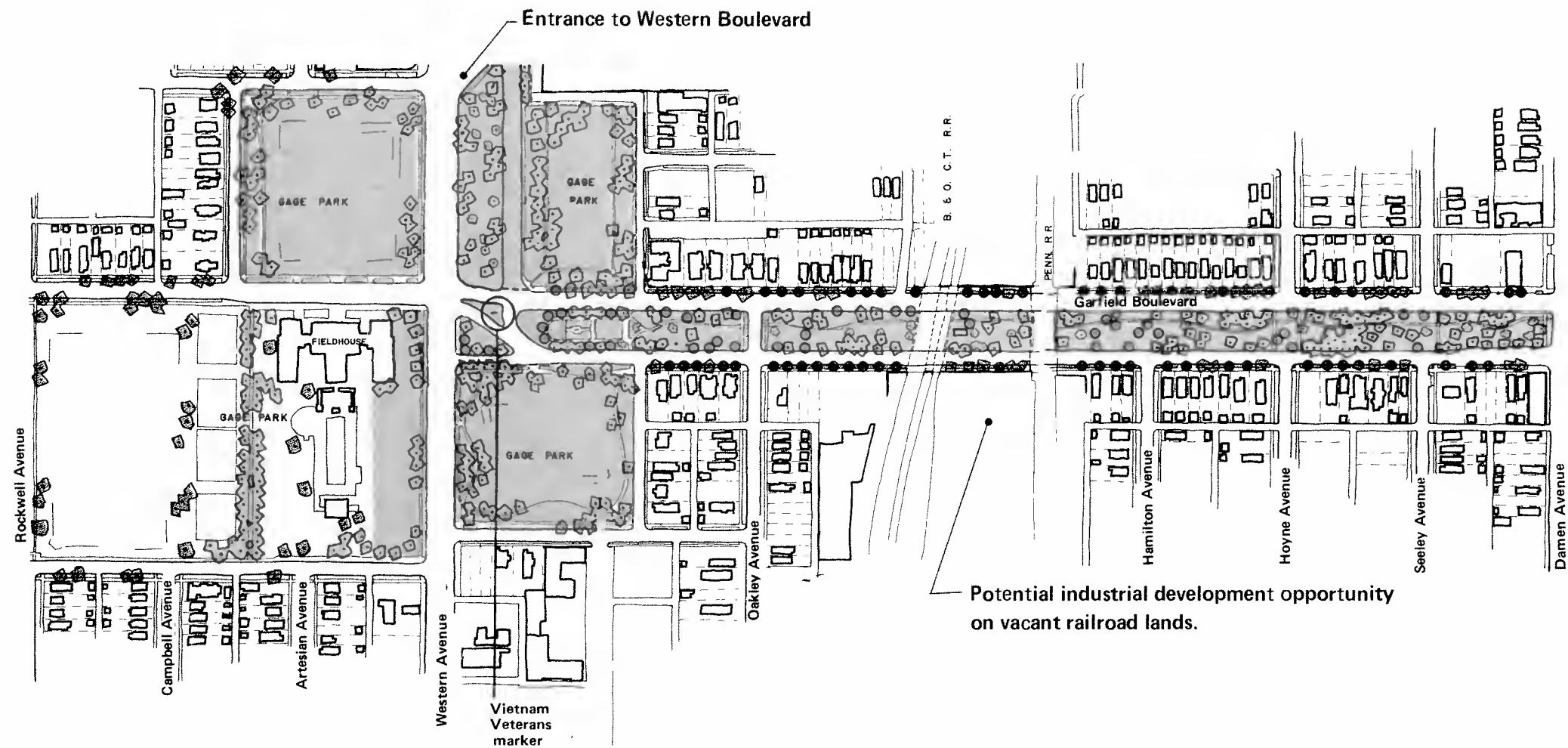




## GARFIELD BOULEVARD RESTORATION PLAN

- Informal tree planting in median.
- Pedestrian trail along median.
- Bicycle trail along street
- Relocate Vietnam Veterans marker to a more visible site.
- Special treatment of median at Loomis Boulevard to indicate entrance to Sherman Park.
- Realign Western and Garfield Boulevards

Repair and rehabilitate existing housing stock.



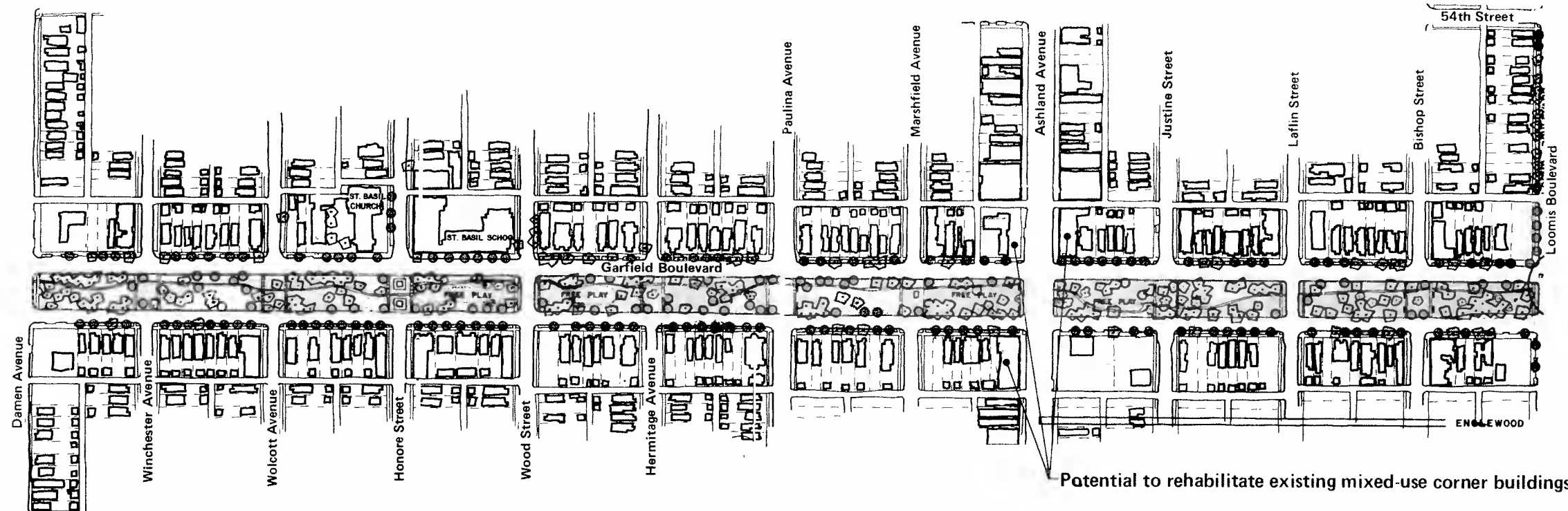
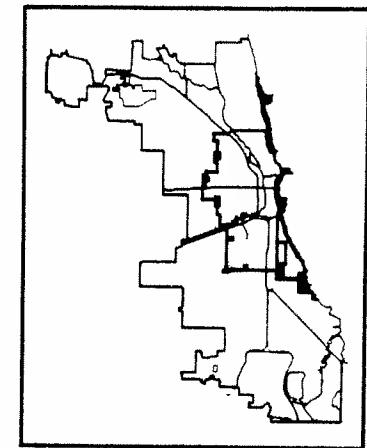
## Garfield Boulevard



Recent Improvements  
(1983-1988)

- Boulevard Restoration \$ 350,000  
400 E.-2400 W. Garfield Blvd.
- Business Area Streetscape \$ 280,000  
South Ashland Ave. from 55th to 57th St.

Repair and rehabilitate existing residential buildings.

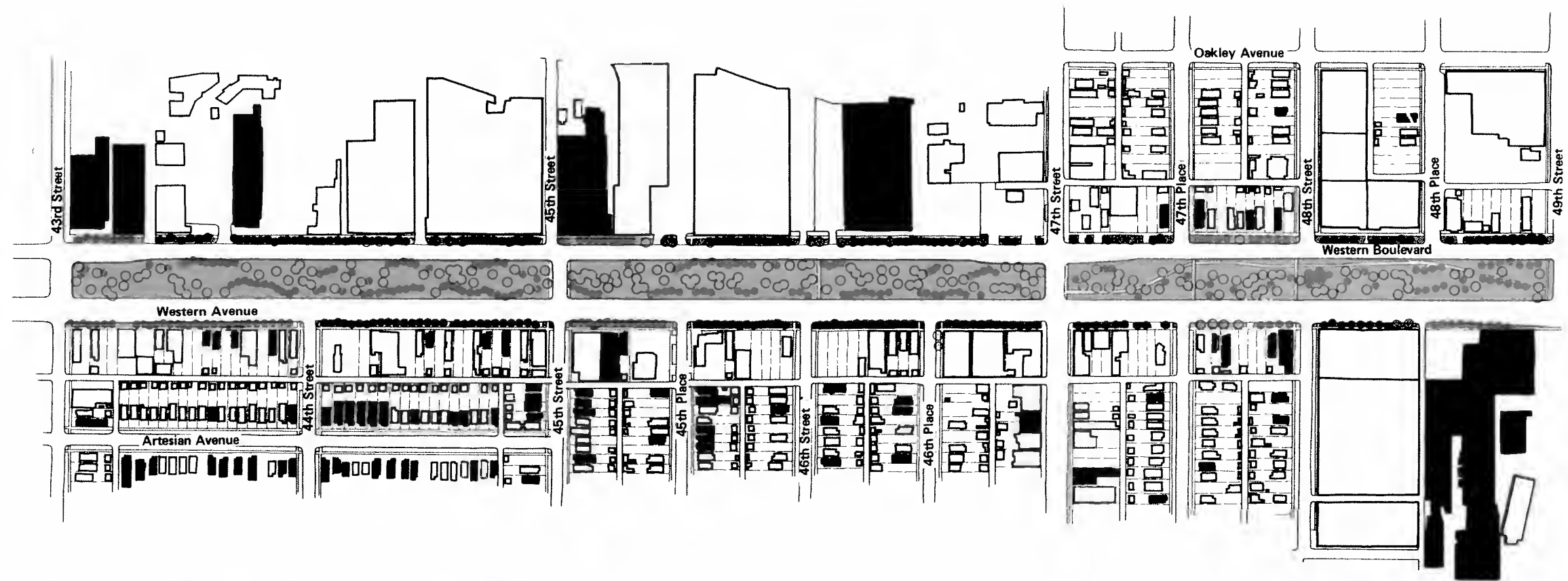


## WESTERN BOULEVARD RESTORATION PLAN

- Informal tree planting in median and parkways.
- Pedestrian trail along median.
- Bicycle trail along street.
- Realign Western Boulevard at Garfield by closing Western Boulevard between 54th Street and Garfield Boulevard.
- Flower beds and ornamental trees at Western and Garfield boulevards.

Industrial Facade Rebate target area.

Commercial development opportunities.

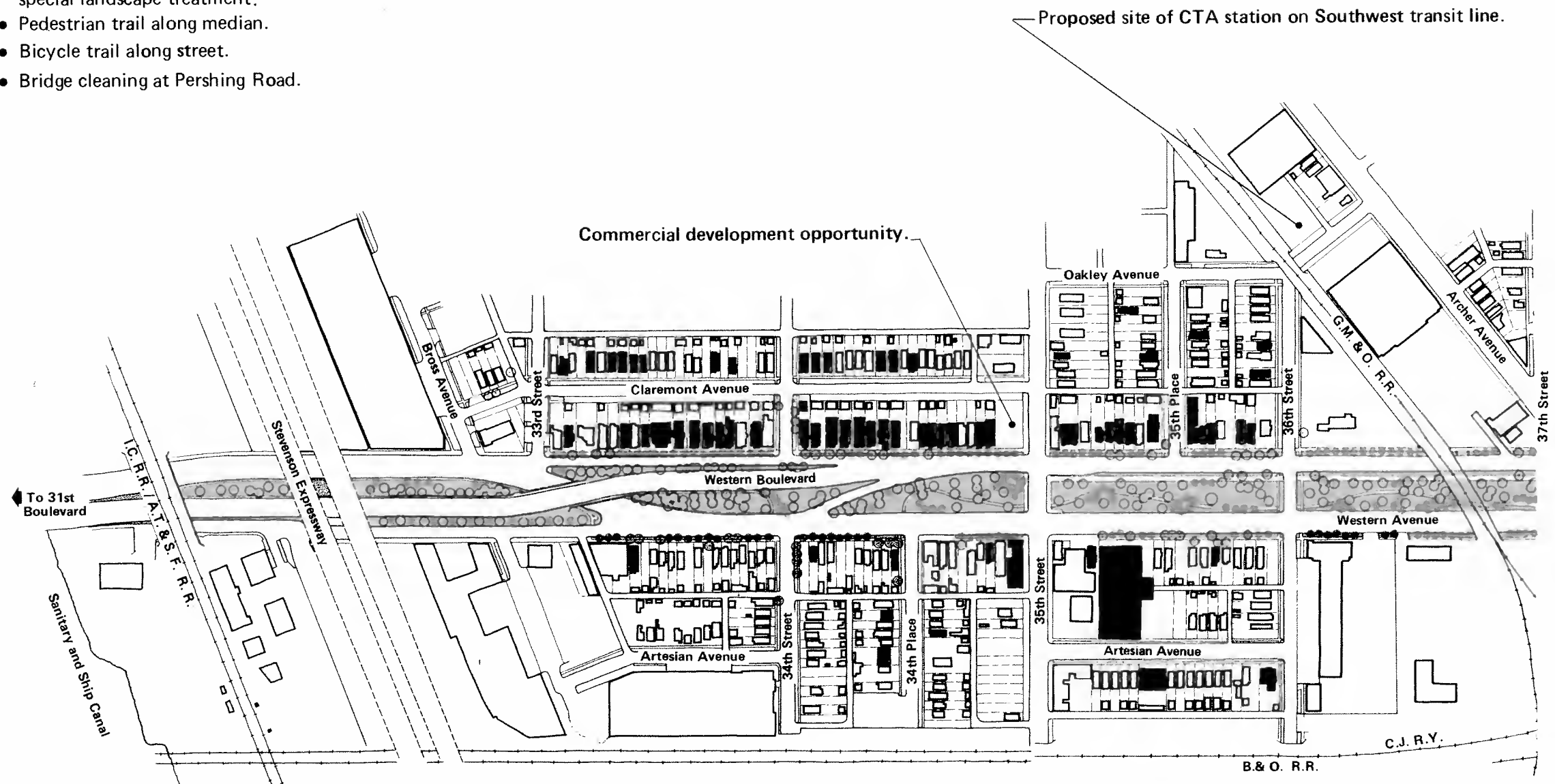


# Western Boulevard



## WESTERN BOULEVARD RESTORATION PLAN

- Informal tree planting in median and parkways.
- Emphasize entrance to McKinley Park with special landscape treatment.
- Pedestrian trail along median.
- Bicycle trail along street.
- Bridge cleaning at Pershing Road.

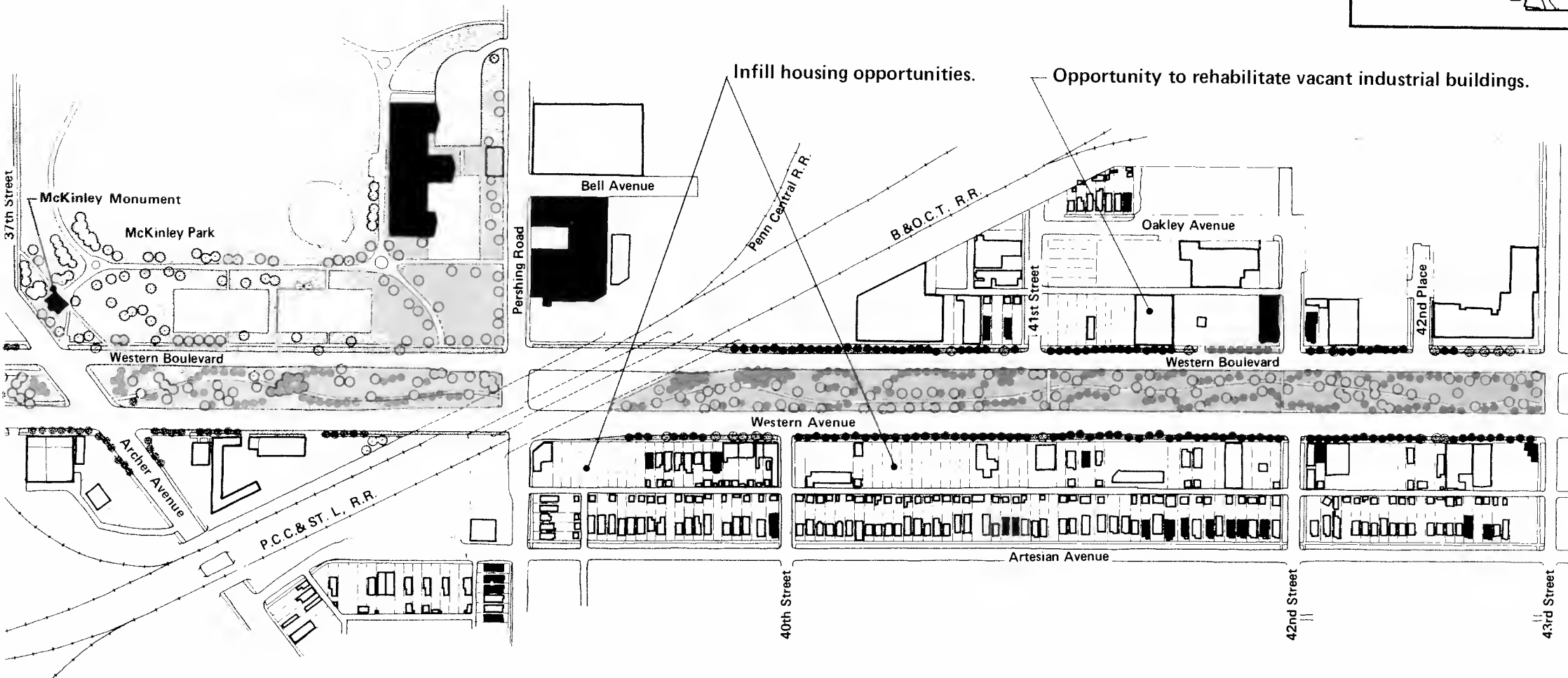
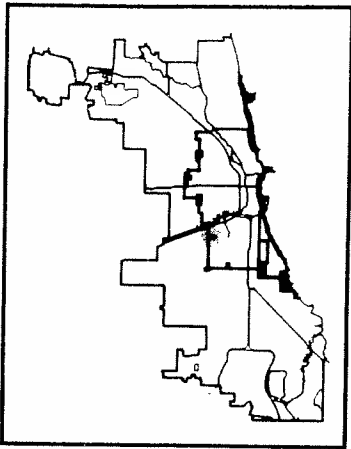


## Western Boulevard





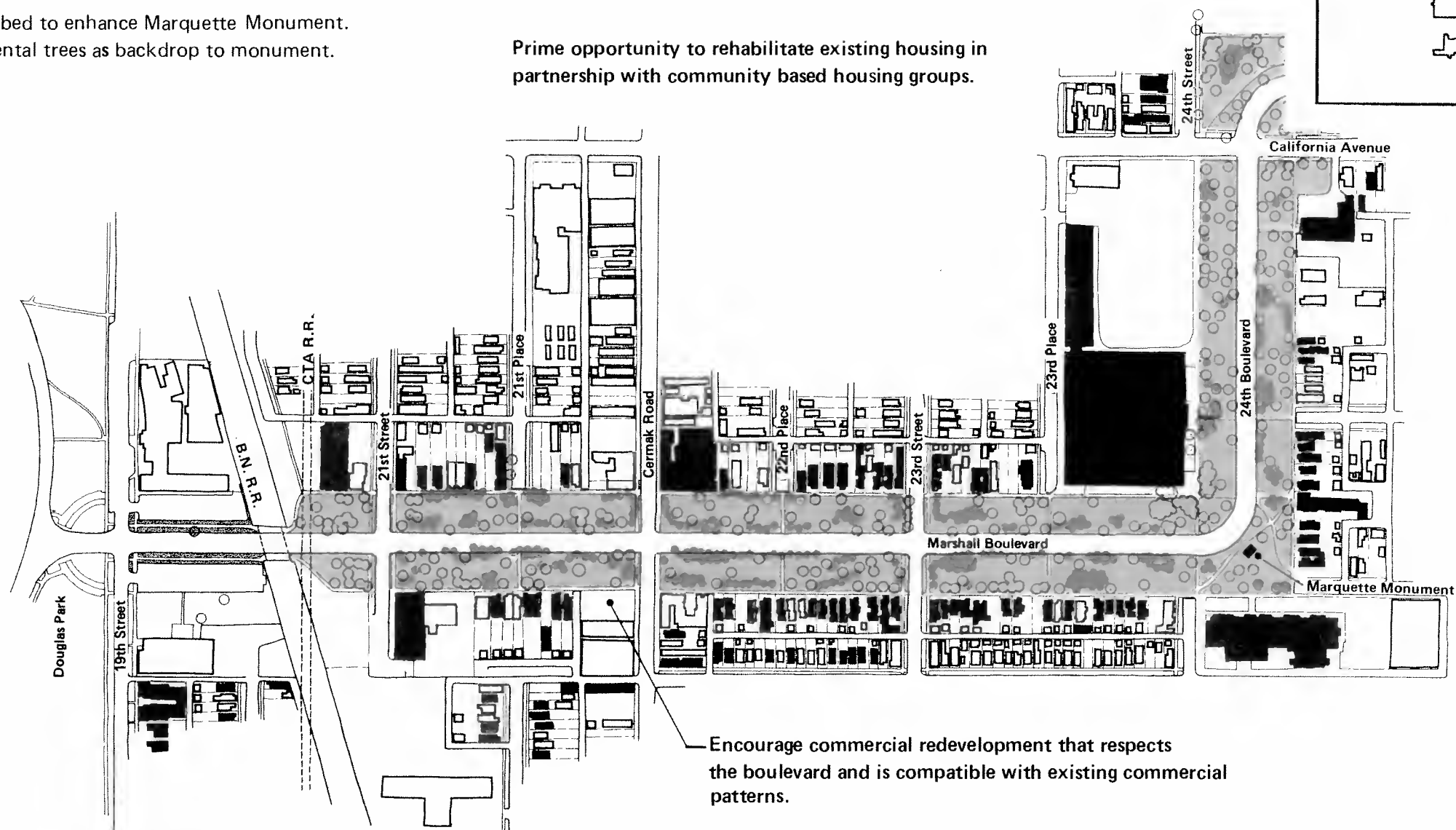
Market Industrial Facade Rebate Program to local industries.



## 24TH / MARSHALL BOULEVARDS RESTORATION PLAN

- Informal tree planting.
- Create open spaces for play activities.
- Pedestrian trail along the sidewalks.
- Bicycle trail along the street.
- Flower bed to enhance Marquette Monument.
- Ornamental trees as backdrop to monument.

Prime opportunity to rehabilitate existing housing in partnership with community based housing groups.



# 24th / Marshall Boulevards

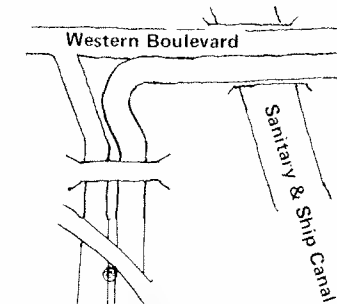
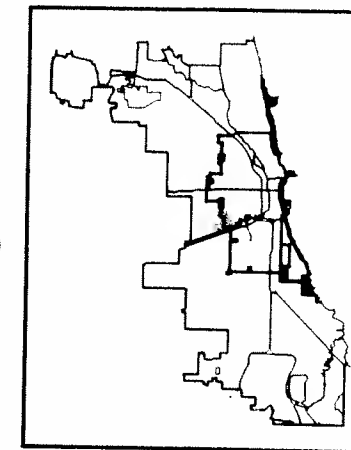


## 31ST / CALIFORNIA BOULEVARDS RESTORATION PLAN

- Informal tree planting in median. Allow for open/recreational areas.
- Create pedestrian and bicycle trails.
- Flower beds at boulevard turning points.
- Potential marker or fountain sites at 24th and California, and at 31st and California.
- Create a link between Western Boulevard and the Illinois Heritage Corridor where the boulevard crosses the waterway.

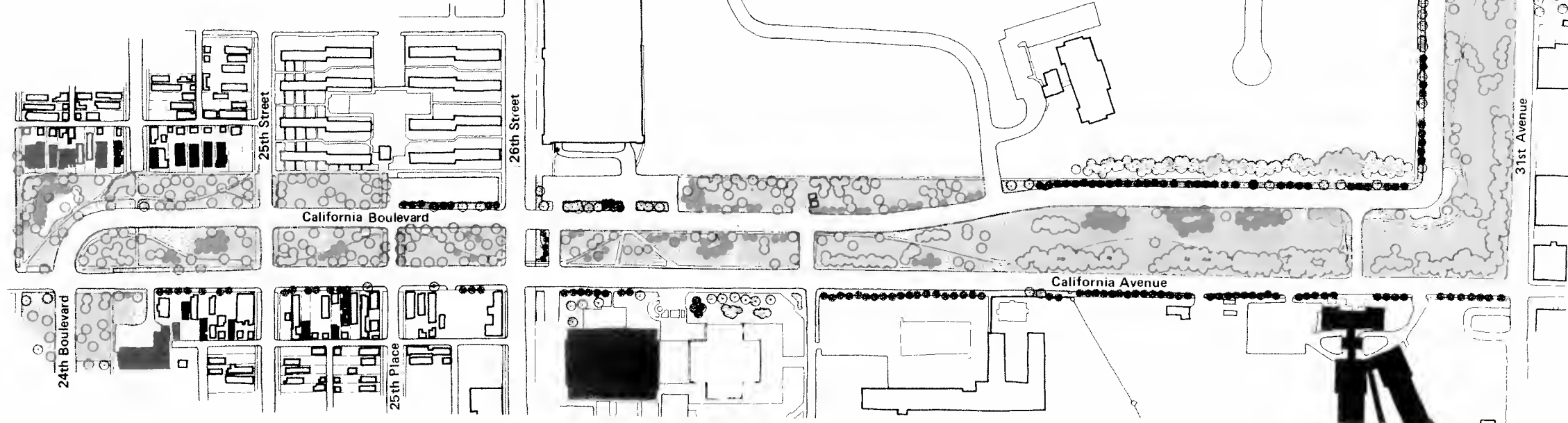
### Recent Improvements (1983-1988)

- Business Area Streetscape  
Cermak Rd. from Marshall Blvd.  
to Rockwell Ave. \$ 804,446
- Boulevard Restoration  
Marshall/24th/California blvds.  
from 19th St. to 31st Blvd. \$ 250,000
- Viaduct Improvements  
1900 S. Marshall Blvd. \$ 71,000



Opportunity for modern industrial park.

Prime opportunity to rehabilitate existing housing in partnership with community based housing groups.



# 31st / California Boulevards

## DOUGLAS BOULEVARD RESTORATION PLAN

- Informal tree planting in the median. Allow for open/play spaces.
- Repair pedestrian walkway.
- Flower beds at specific intersections.
- Bicycle trail along street.
- Repair or remove One Family One World sculpture at S. Kedzie Avenue .
- Close S. Albany Street at the median to reinforce continuity of the boulevard. Landscape with flowers and ornamental trees.
- Potential monument site at intersection of Albany Avenue and the boulevard.
- Identify entrance to Douglas Park through special landscape treatment.

Proposed site for the development of 78 rowhouses as part of the Demonstration Affordable Housing Program.



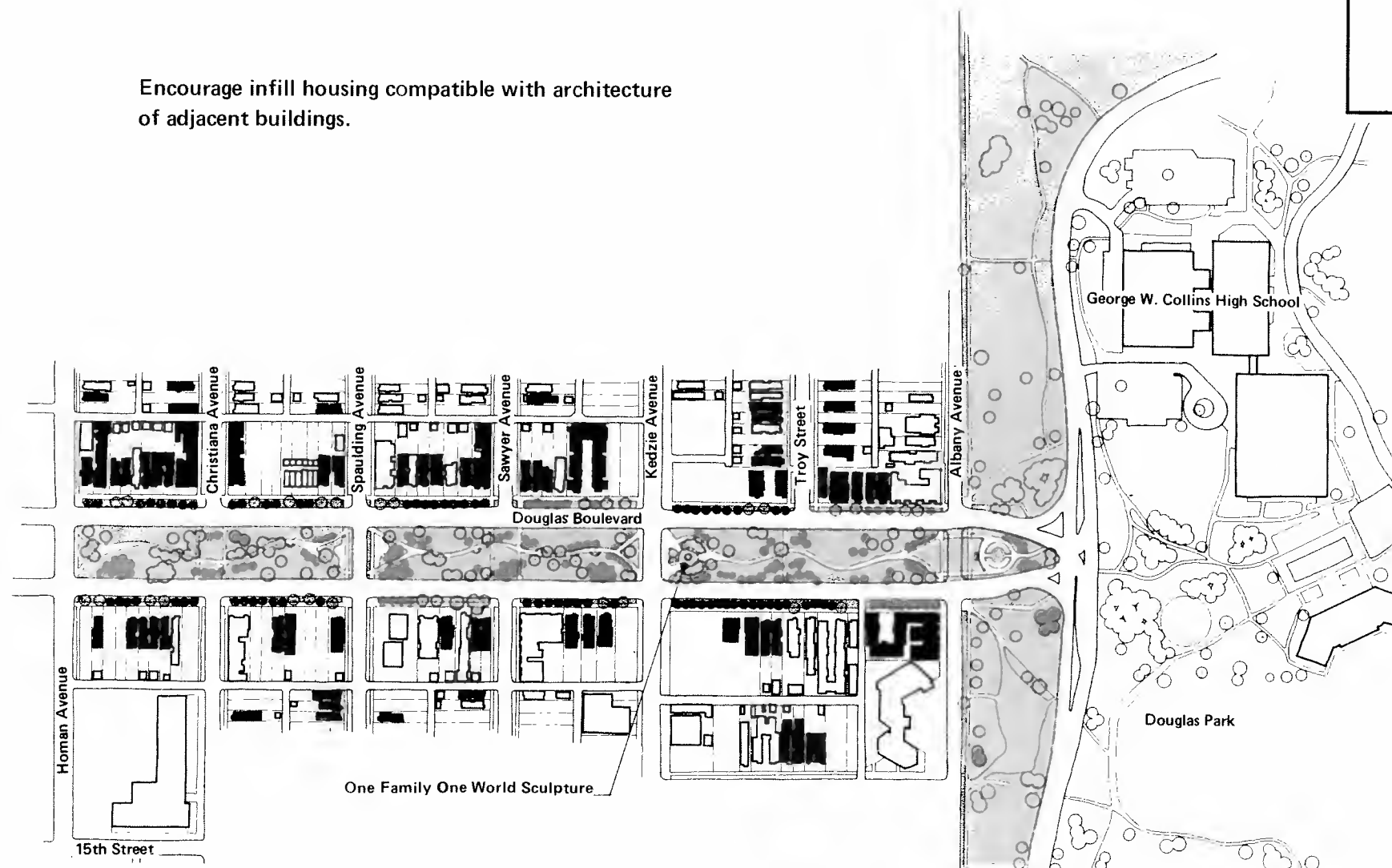
## Douglas Boulevard



Recent Improvements  
(1983-1988)

- Model Block \$ 20,000  
3750-3799 W. Douglas Blvd.

Encourage infill housing compatible with architecture  
of adjacent buildings.



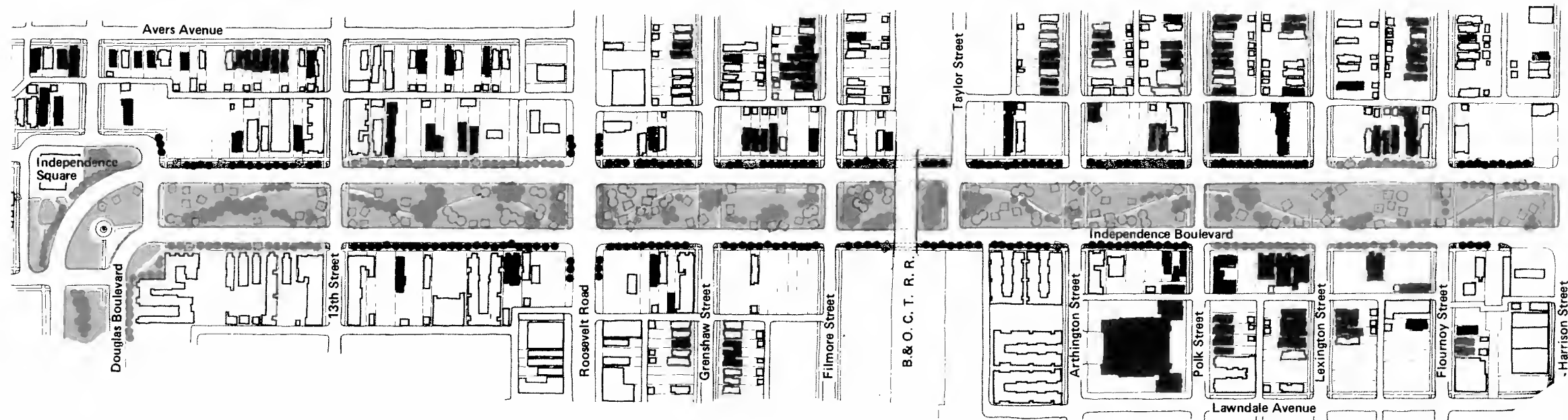
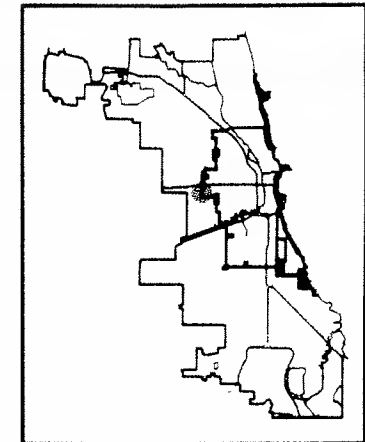


## INDEPENDENCE BOULEVARD RESTORATION PLAN

- Informal tree planting in the median. Allow for open/play spaces.
- Pedestrian trail along median.
- Ornamental trees and flower beds as backdrop to the American Youth and Independence Day fountain and sculpture.
- Bicycle trail along street.
- Earth berm and ornamental trees to screen day care center building.

### Recent Improvements (1983-1988)

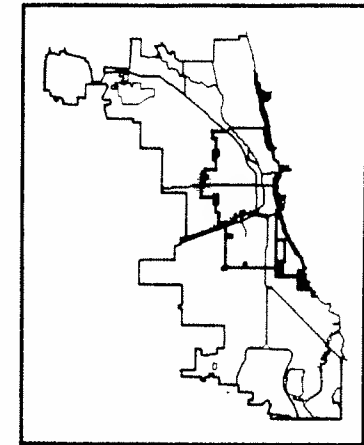
- |  |              |
|--|--------------|
| • Restoration of Youth and Independence Day Fountain and Monument. | \$ 26,000    |
| • Major Street Improvements<br>600-1398 S. Independence Blvd.      | \$ 3,325,000 |
| • Traffic Signal Improvements<br>600-1400 S. Independence Blvd.    | \$ 470,000   |



Opportunity to convert the former Sears complex into a modern light industrial/business park with new housing developed on existing parking lots.

## Independence Boulevard



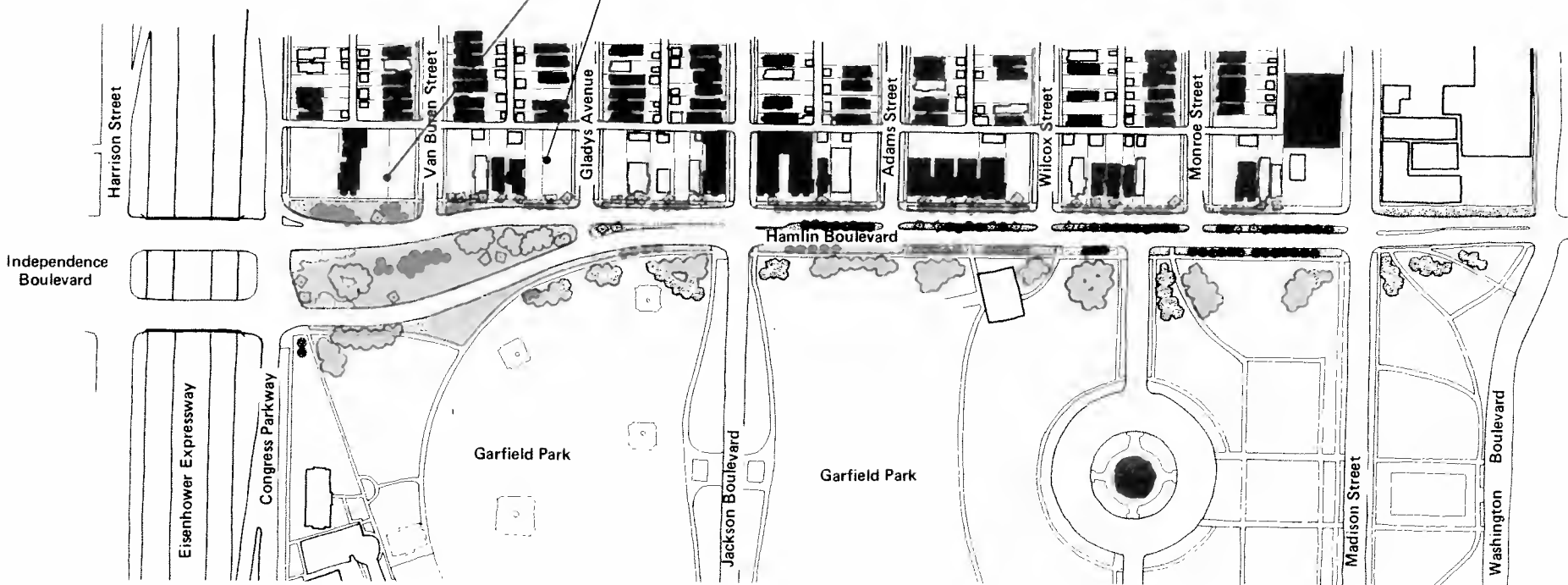


# HAMLIN BOULEVARD RESTORATION PLAN

- Informal tree planting along medians and parkways.
- Sidewalks to serve as pedestrian trail.
- Bicycle trail along street.
- Informal landscape treatment of Garfield Park's entrance at Hamlin Boulevard and Eisenhower Expressway.

Continue rehabilitation of housing.

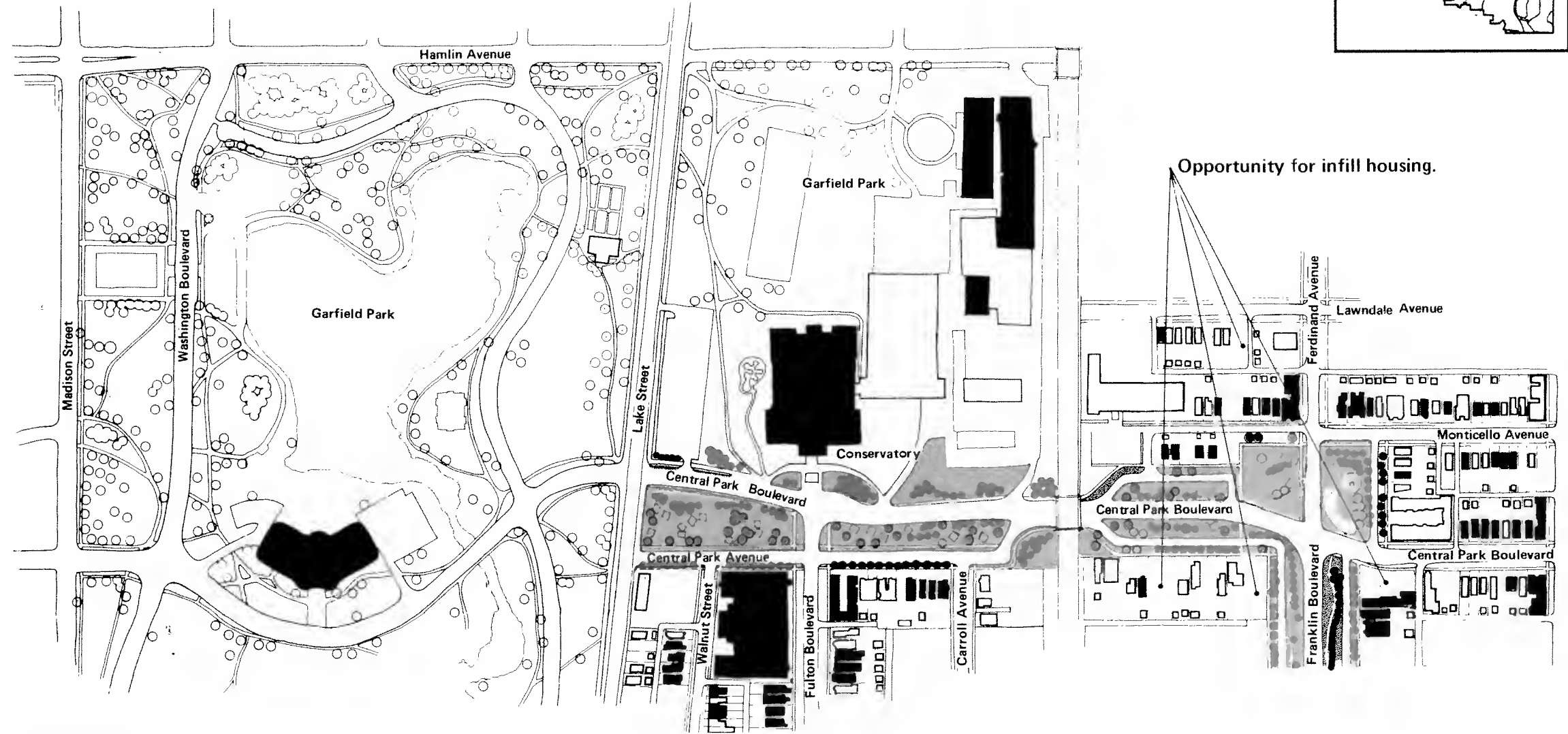
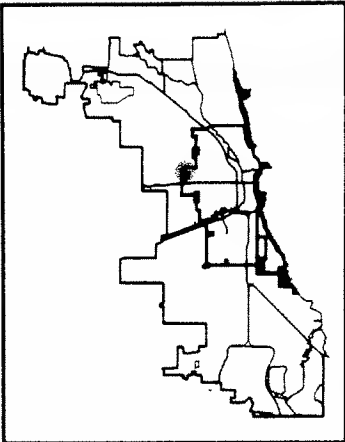
Infill housing opportunities.



Hamlin Boulevard

# CENTRAL PARK BOULEVARD RESTORATION PLAN

- Informal tree planting.
- Pedestrian trail on medians.

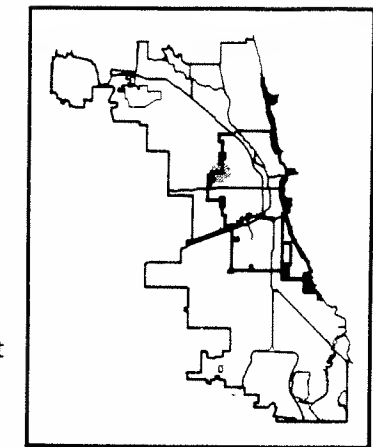


## Central Park Boulevard

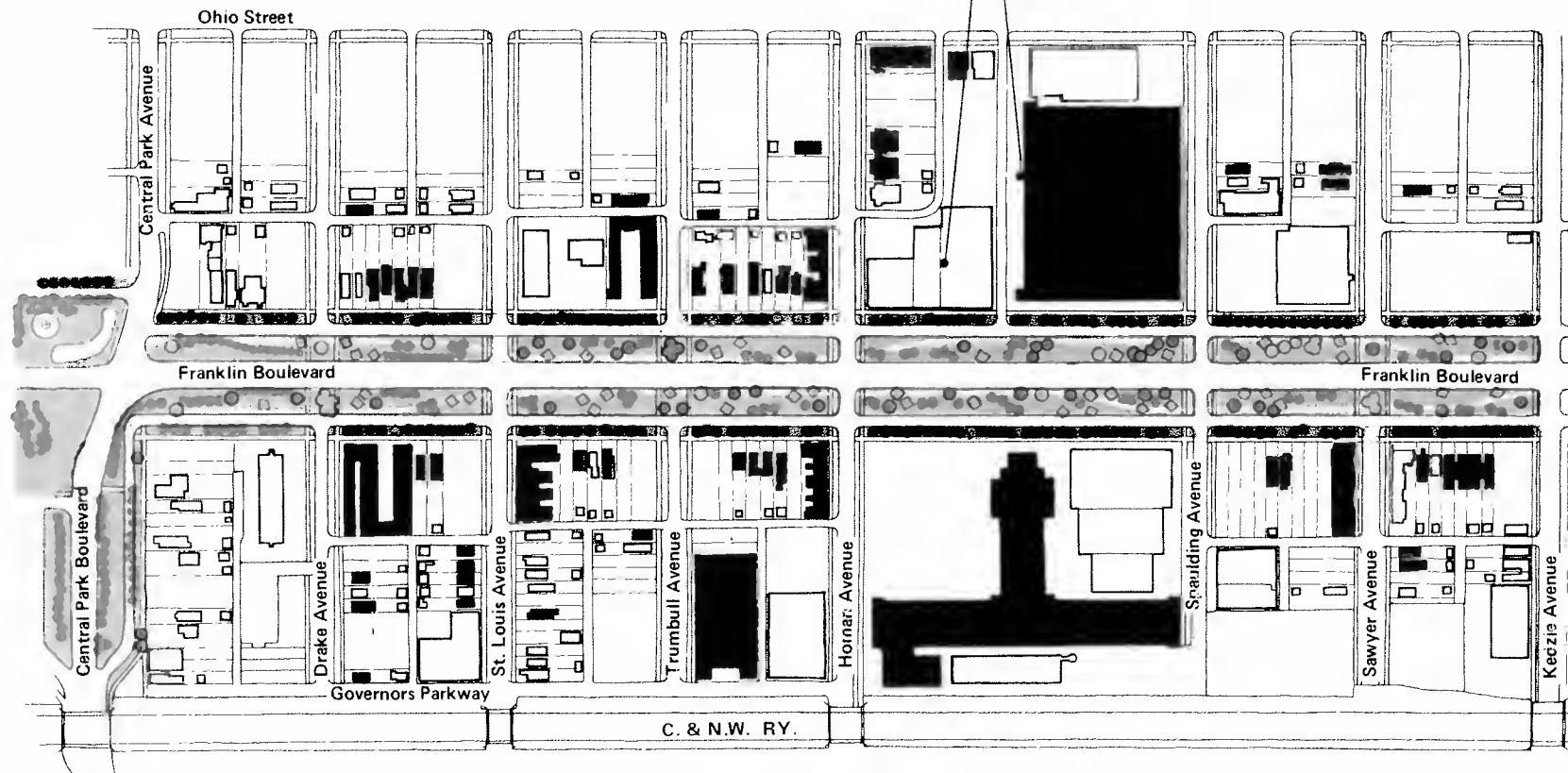


## FRANKLIN BOULEVARD RESTORATION PLAN

- Informal tree planting in medians and parkways.
- Pedestrian trail along medians.
- Bicycle trail on service roads.
- Repair curbs and service roads.
- Develop intersection of Franklin and Central Park boulevards as a focal point by planting shrubs or flowers, and possibly locating a monument.
- Close right turning lane at Central Park and Franklin boulevards and convert to landscaped open space.



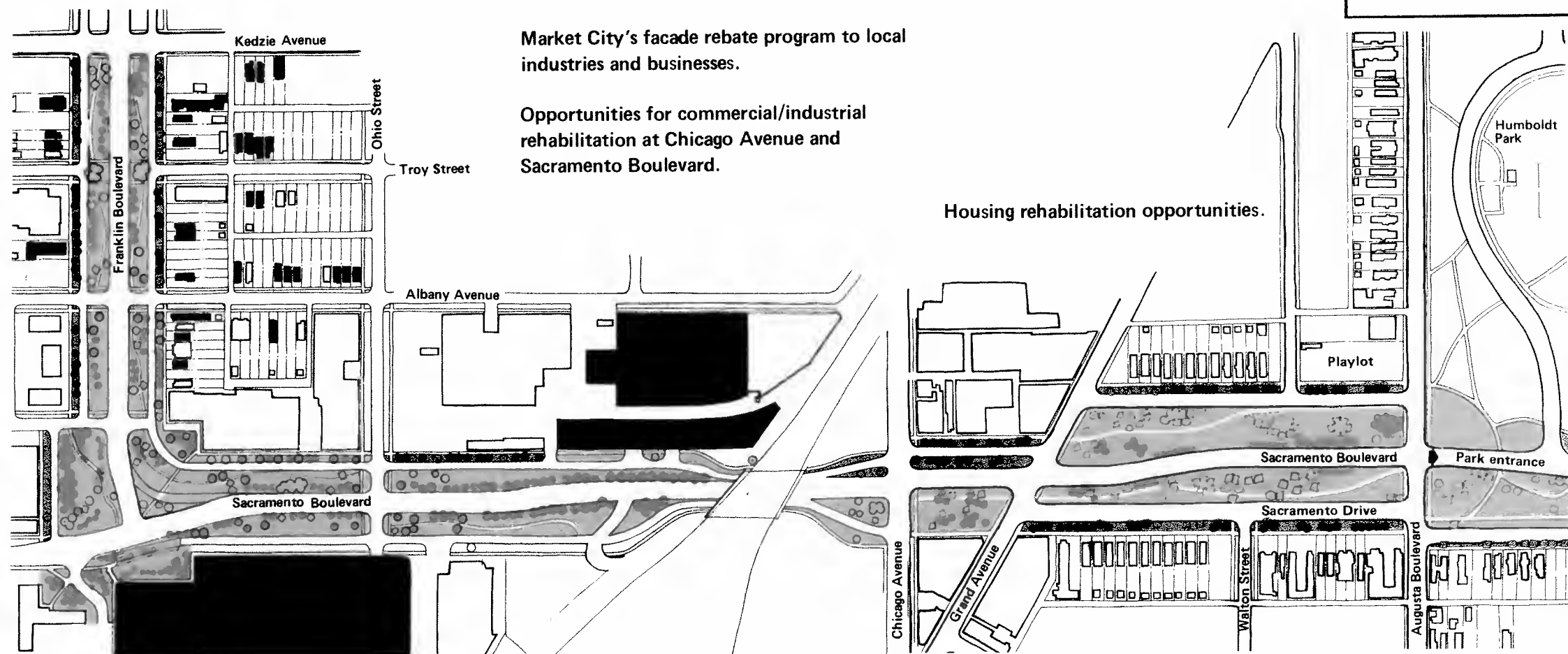
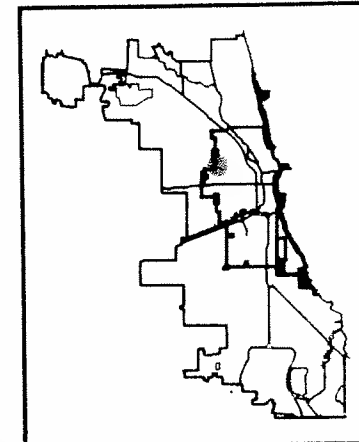
Opportunity for the rehabilitation of vacant industrial buildings for light manufacturing purposes.



# Franklin Boulevard

## SACRAMENTO BOULEVARD RESTORATION PLAN

- Informal tree planting pattern in medians.
  - Flower beds at Augusta/Sacramento intersection.
  - New pedestrian trail on medians.
  - Bicycle trail on service roads.
- Improve playground at Sacramento and Augusta boulevards.



## Sacramento Boulevard





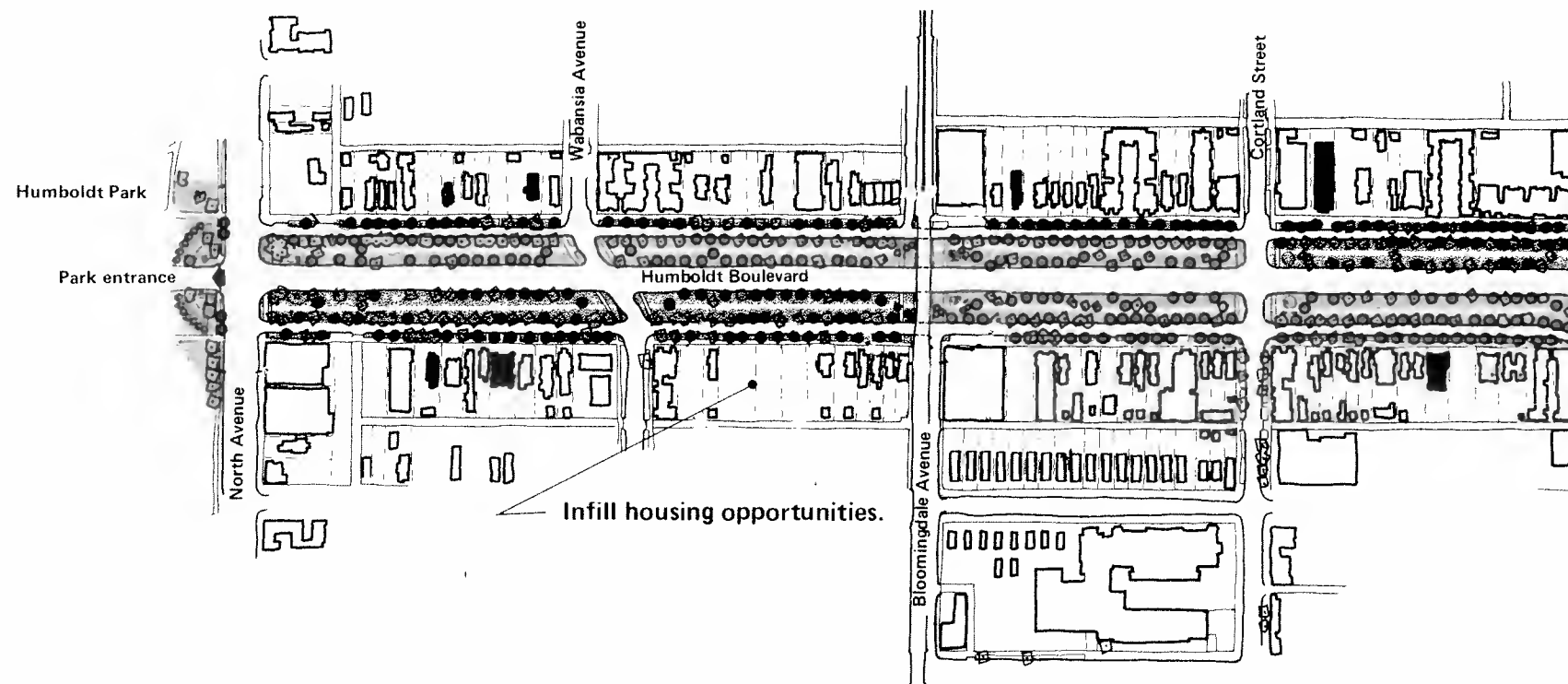
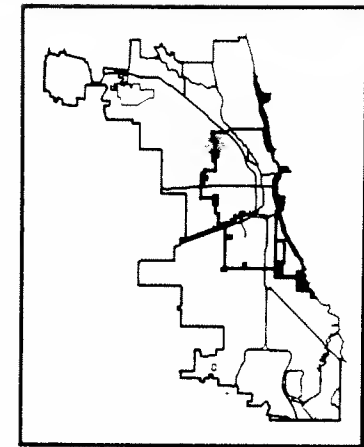
## HUMBOLDT BOULEVARD RESTORATION PLAN

- Formal tree planting in medians and parkways.
- Pedestrian trail in east median.
- Beautify C.M. ST. P. & P. R.R. bridge by painting it.
- Landscape and identify entrance to Humboldt Park.

### Recent Improvements (1983-1988)

- Intermittent Street Resurfacing 1200 to 1598 N. Humboldt Blvd. \$ 197,000
- Model Block 1900-1999 N. Humboldt Blvd. \$ 40,000
- Street Curb Improvements 1600-2000 N. Humboldt Blvd. \$ 123,000

Encourage additional rehabilitation program for existing housing.  
Target larger apartment buildings first.



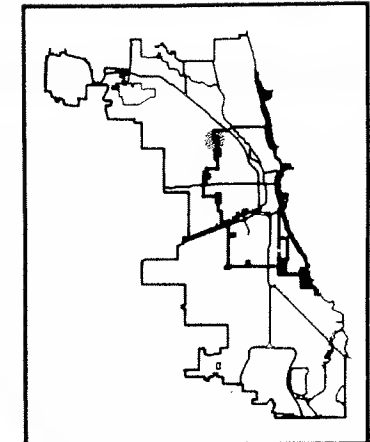
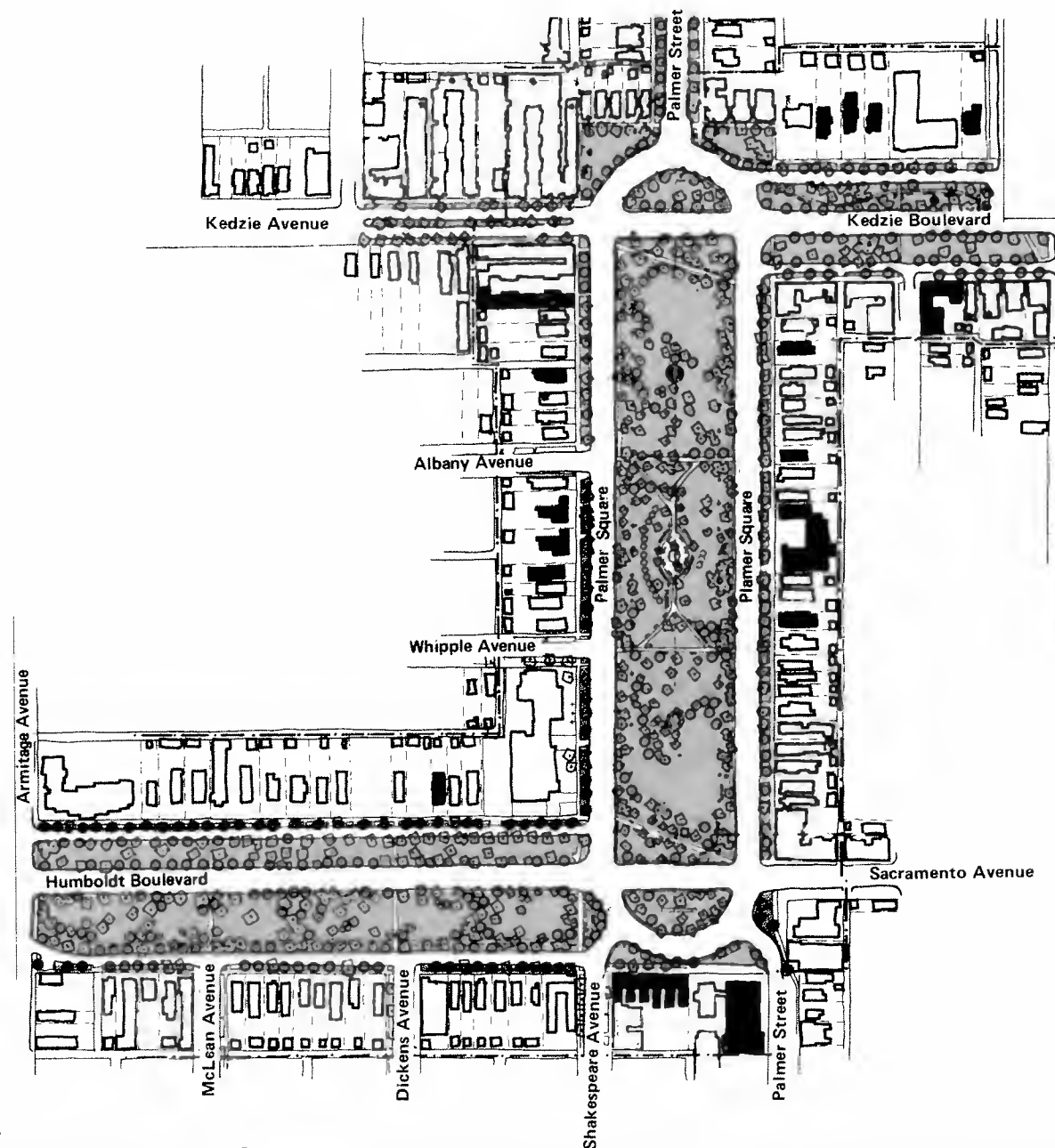
# Humboldt Boulevard

## HUMBOLDT BOULEVARD/PALMER SQUARE RESTORATION PLAN

- Parklike planting on east median of Humboldt Boulevard, which is significantly wider than the west median.
- Formal planting on west median.
- Pedestrian trail along east median.
- Bicycle trail on service roads.
- Formalize jogging path.
- Parklike planting and flower beds in Palmer Square.
- Provide open play areas.
- Remake circular curbs on east and west sides.
- Carriage walk around the edge of Palmer Square.

Recent Improvements  
(1983-1988)

- Boulevard Restoration \$ 250,000
- Palmer Square



# Humboldt Boulevard / Palmer Square

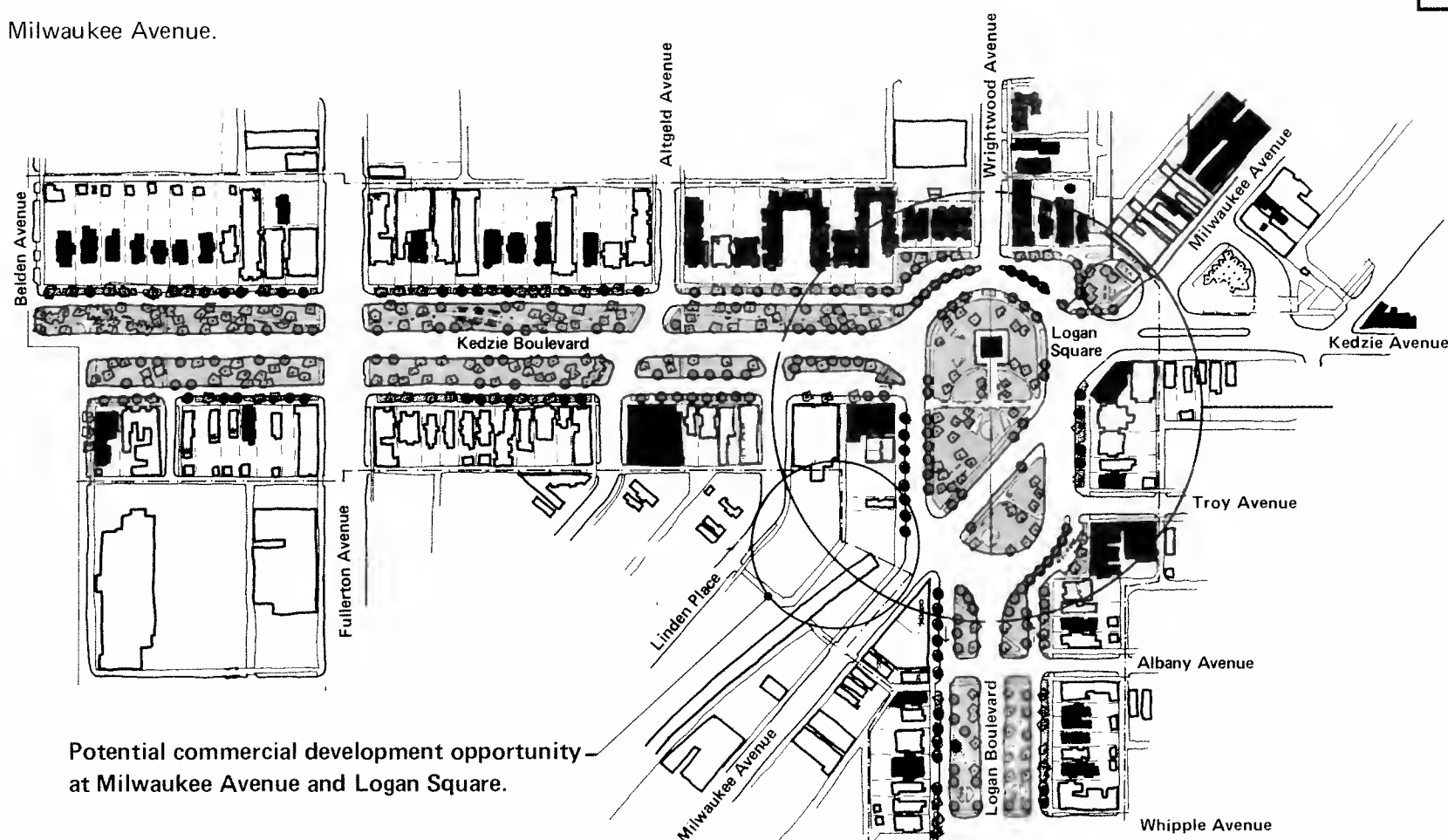
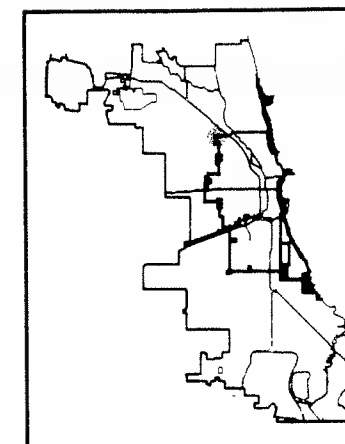


## KEDZIE BOULEVARD/LOGAN SQUARE RESTORATION PLAN

- Informal tree planting along Kedzie Boulevard.
- Pedestrian trail on medians.
- Bicycle trail on service roads.
- Planting pattern should emphasize Illinois Centennial monument as the focal point at Logan Square.
- Screen parking around Logan Square.
- Screen CTA facility.
- Eliminate billboards at Milwaukee Avenue.

### Recent Improvements (1983-1988)

- Intermittent Street Resurfacing \$ 12,000  
2544-2612 N. Kedzie Blvd.



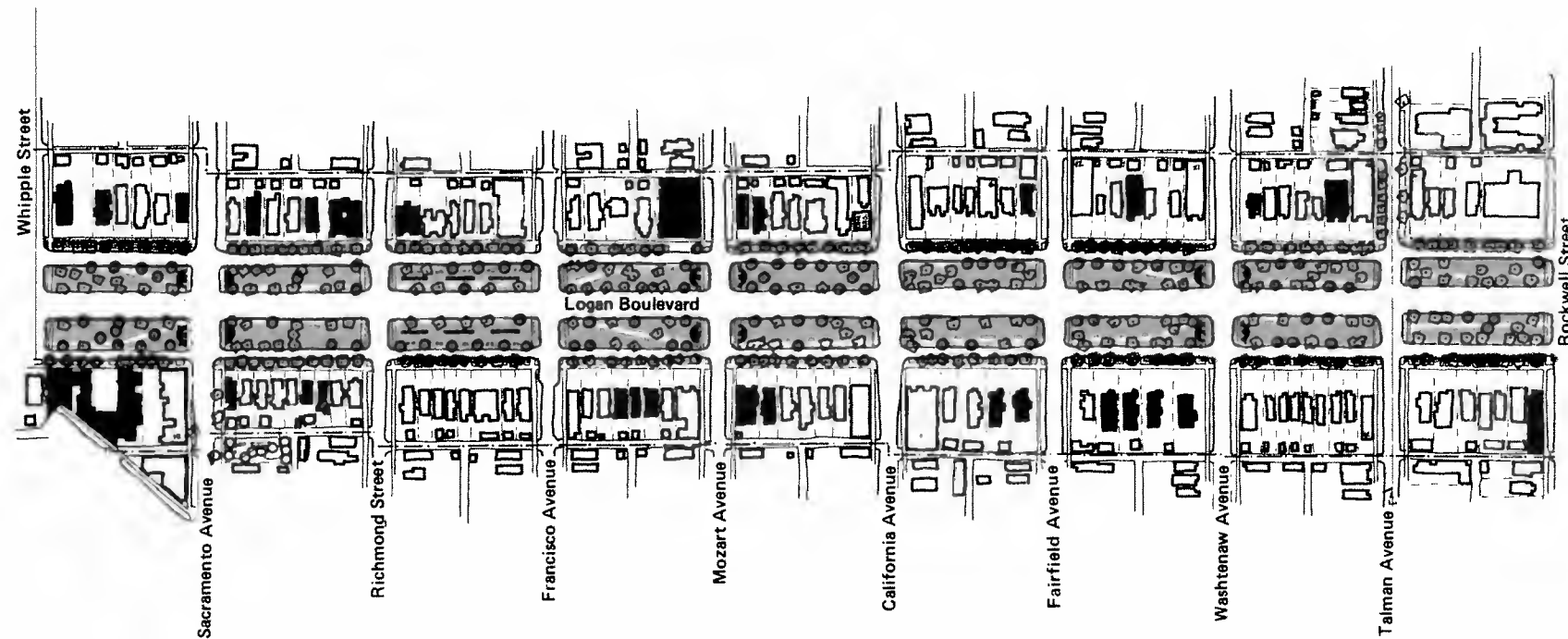
Potential commercial development opportunity  
at Milwaukee Avenue and Logan Square.



# Kedzie Boulevard / Logan Square

## LOGAN BOULEVARD RESTORATION PLAN

- Identify entrance to Logan Boulevard from Diversey Parkway.
- Informal tree planting and flower beds within medians.
- Pedestrian trail on north and south medians of the boulevard.
- Bicycle trail along service roads.
- Re-open pedestrian tunnel under expressway for storage of maintenance equipment.



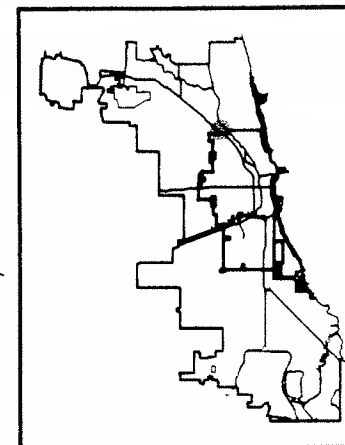
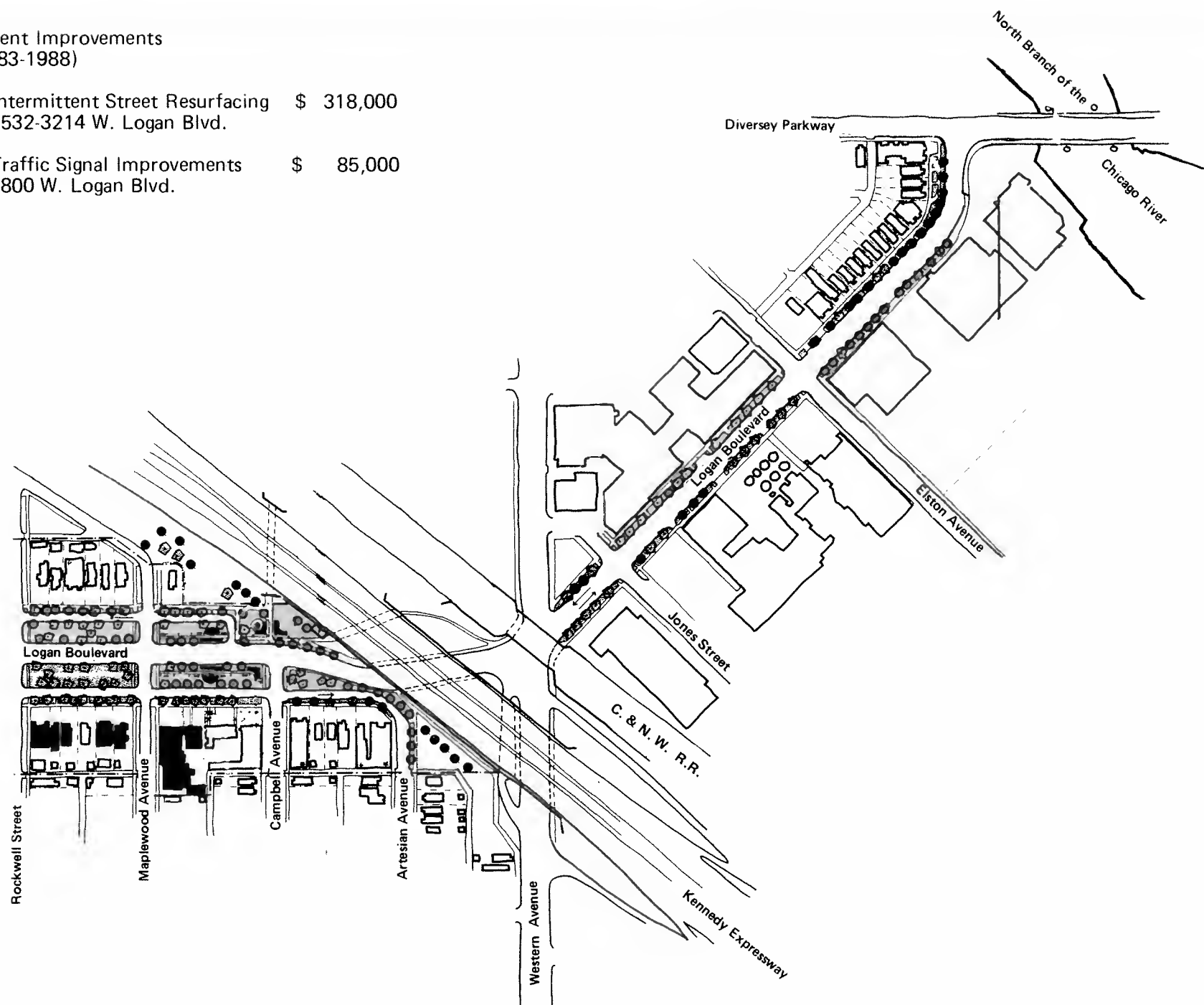
# Logan Boulevard



Recent Improvements  
(1983-1988)

Intermittent Street Resurfacing   \$ 318,000  
2532-3214 W. Logan Blvd.

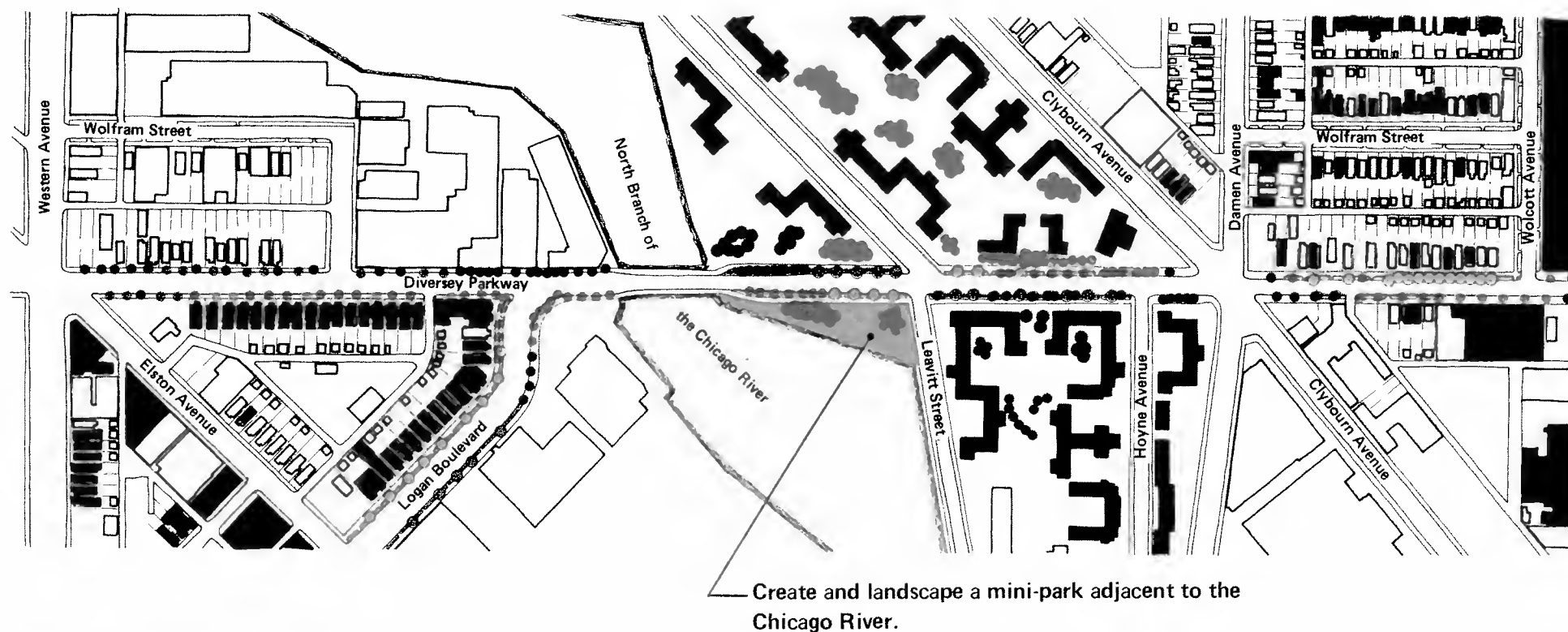
Traffic Signal Improvements       \$ 85,000  
2800 W. Logan Blvd.





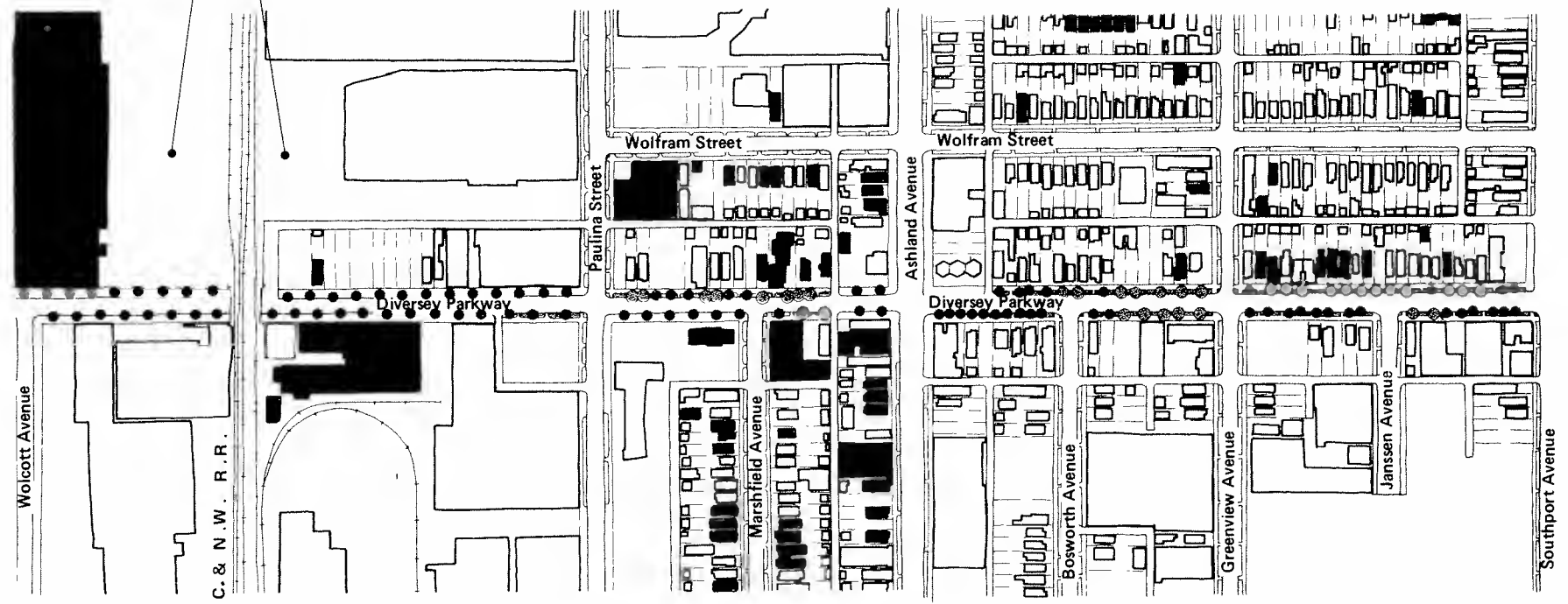
## DIVERSEY PARKWAY RESTORATION PLAN

- Extensive planting of parkway trees on both sides of the street.
- Pedestrian trail along the south sidewalk
- Bicycle trail along street.
- Identify entrance to Logan Boulevard.
- Extend formal planting to Western Avenue.
- Create a link between Diversey Parkway and the North Branch of the Chicago River.

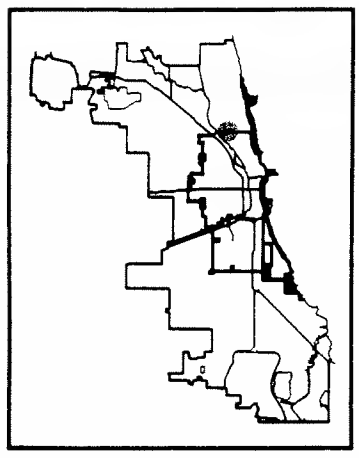


## Diversey Parkway



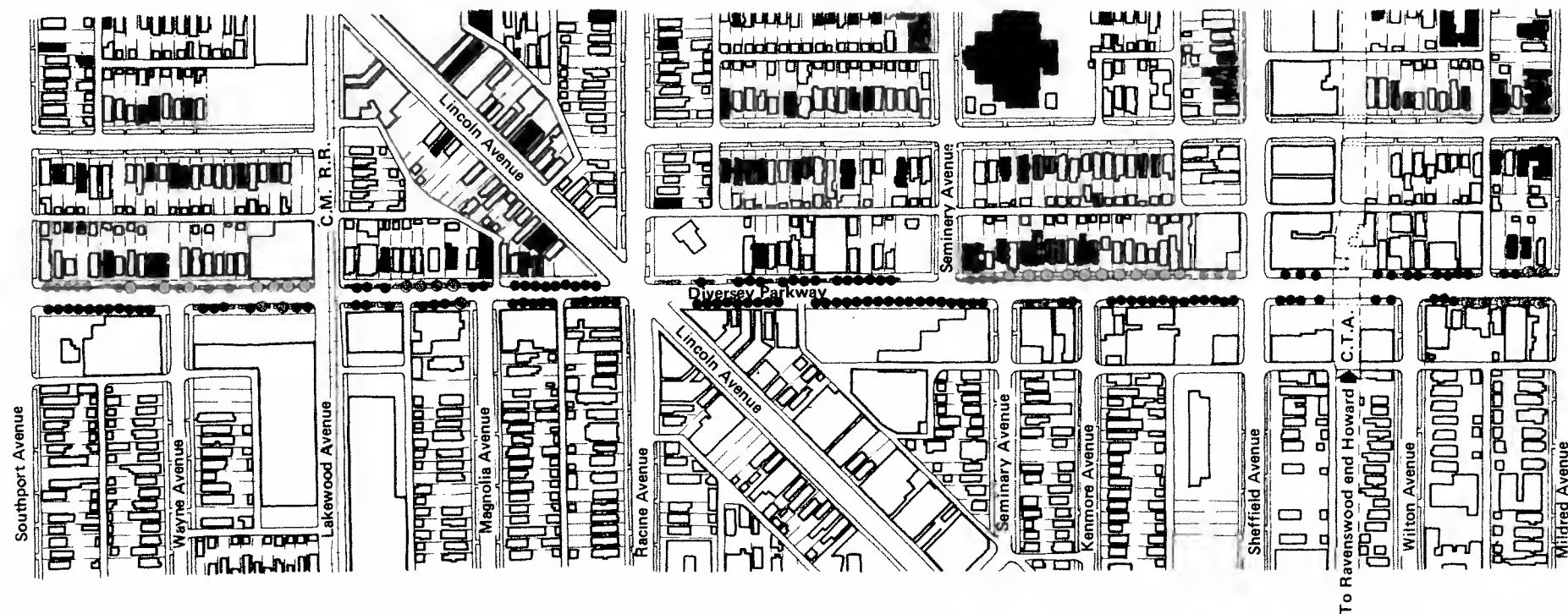


Industrial development opportunity focused on Centrum's new industrial park and industrial reuse of the Emerson Electric plant.



## DIVERSEY PARKWAY RESTORATION PLAN

- Extensive planting of parkway trees in the north and south parkways. Some areas require the use of planters.
- Marker to identify entrance to the boulevard system at the intersection of Sheridan Road, Diversey Parkway and Lakeview Avenue.
- Pedestrian trail along the south sidewalk.
- Bicycle trail along street.



# Diversey Parkway



Recent Improvements  
(1983-1988)

- Viaduct Improvements \$ 20,000  
198-200 W. Diversey Parkway

